

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Government takes aim
at affirmative action

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 59/NO. 18 MAY 8, 1995

White House calls for expanded FBI spying

Oklahoma bombing used to attack democratic rights

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The White House and Congress have launched a bipartisan drive to expand domestic spying operations and probe the possibilities of narrowing democratic rights in the wake of the April 19 bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

While politicians and the big-business media have toned down the anti-Arab, anti-Islamic barrage they initiated moments after the blast ripped through the facility, Clinton administration officials and members of Congress have raised the pitch against the "threat of terrorism."

Three of the four main suspects in the blast are U.S.-born white men. At press time, the fourth, dubbed "John Doe no. 2," remains at large.

The White House insists it will demand the death penalty for those convicted of setting the blast. At press time, the death toll was approaching 100 — a number expected to rise — and more than 400 men, women, and children were injured.

"I was treated like dirt, like a dog," said Abraham Ahmad, who happened to be flying to Europe several hours after the bomb went off. Ahmad, a U.S. citizen born in Jordan, was seized, questioned, and harassed by British cops, who handed him over to Washington for more interrogation. He was released two days after being detained. "I was pronounced guilty by the media," said Ahmad, who also reported that people poured trash on the lawn of his Oklahoma City home and spit on his wife.

The anti-Arab, anti-Islamic chauvinism whipped up by the press and politicians resulted in a spate of police intimidation, bomb threats, harassing phone calls, physical assaults, and vandalism against Muslim organizations, mosques, and people of Arab descent in the United States and other countries.

While the White House in recent days has tried to disassociate itself from the most virulent anti-Arab attacks, it was Secretary of State Warren Christopher who, only hours after the bombing, de-



FBI SWAT team at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma. Bipartisan call for expanded police powers utilizes Oklahoma bombing as justification.

clared he had sent Arabic interpreters to aid the federal investigation in Oklahoma. Former representative Dave McCurdy declared there was "very clear evidence" of the involvement of

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Canada secret police seize young socialist; rapid protests denounce gov't

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — Two agents of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) seized Nojan Emad, a Cuba solidarity activist and leader of the Toronto Young Socialists, April 20 in the Pathfinder bookstore here. They dragged him out of the store into a waiting van where four agents detained and interrogated him for close to an hour.

Emad was released only after a lawyer's call, organized by bookstore staffers, reached him via the van's cellular phone.

The lawyer, Bob Kellerman, spoke at a broadly attended April 22 press conference to protest the illegal harassment of Emad. He told the press that the young socialist "essentially was kidnapped by a police force."

Emad, 19, is a garment worker and political activist. In January, he traveled to Cuba as part of the International Youth Brigade. He has since spoken publicly many times in defense of the Cuban revolution, been interviewed on the radio, and wrote an article on Cuba in the April 12 *Eyeopener*, the Ryerson University newspaper. He is also a member of the Communist League.

The day before his abduction, Emad attended a demonstration of 2,500 people in Montreal defending women's, immigrant, and democratic rights outside the convention of the right-wing Human Life International.

Two plain clothes RCMP agents from the National Security Investigations Section entered the Pathfinder bookstore in

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Mark Curtis demands right to read new pamphlet on his defense case

BY JOHN STUDER

DES MOINES, Iowa — "Notice of Rejection of Correspondence" read the form handed to imprisoned union and political activist Mark Curtis April 13. It said he was being denied the new Pathfinder Press pamphlet *Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Jail?* Prison authorities said the pamphlet is not on the "list of approved publications."

Handwritten on the bottom of the form was a note to Curtis telling him to authorize paying shipping costs to send the pamphlet back to the Pathfinder bookstore in Des Moines. Otherwise, the pamphlet would be destroyed.

Curtis wrote back that he did not want the pamphlet sent back to the bookstore. If they were going to refuse to deliver it to him, he wanted it sent to the Publication Review Committee in the Des Moines headquarters of the Iowa Department of Corrections for approval. The next day Curtis was handed a one-word reply: "Noted."

Curtis has served more than six years in Iowa state prison on frame-up charges of rape and burglary. He was arrested after speaking out in Spanish at a public meeting to protest the arrest of 17 of his co-workers at the Monfort meatpacking plant in Des Moines.

Federal immigration agents and city police raided the plant, seized 17 workers

from Mexico and El Salvador, and threatened them with prosecution or deportation.

On the night of his arrest, Curtis was brutally beaten by the cops, who called him a "Mexican lover." He was railroaded

to prison and has been fighting since to win public support for his release and to win political vindication in the court of public opinion. The Mark Curtis Defense Committee was formed after his arrest to

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Available from Pathfinder

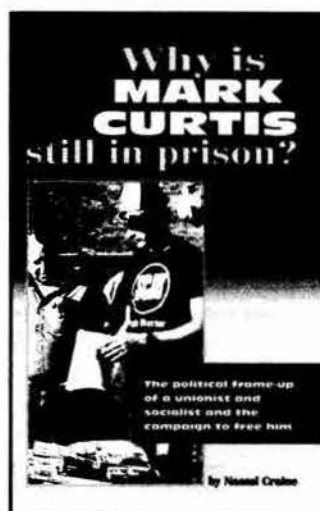
Why is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?

The Political Frame-Up of a Unionist and Socialist and the Campaign to Free Him
by Naomi Craine

Mark Curtis is a union activist and socialist who was framed up by police on false charges of rape and burglary in March 1988. At the time he was involved in a struggle to defend 17 Mexican and Salvadoran co-workers arrested in an immigration raid at the packinghouse where he worked in Des Moines, Iowa.

This new pamphlet explains what happened to Curtis, and the stakes for workers, farmers, youth, and other democratic-minded people in demanding his release. \$6

Available at bookstores, including those listed on page 12, or write Pathfinder, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Tel: (212) 741-0690. Fax (212) 727-0150. Or contact the Mark Curtis Defense Committee, P.O. Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa, 50311. Tel: (515) 246-1695.



Miami event for Cuban youth leader is big success

BY SETH GALINSKY

MIAMI — In a victory for free speech and for defense of the Cuban revolution, Cuban youth leader Kenia Serrano addressed a widely publicized public forum at Florida International University (FIU) April 20.

The FIU administration tried to prevent Serrano from speaking on campus—and after that failed, tried to sabotage the event. Students and other activists publicized the forum through mass distribution of flyers for eight days leading up to the meeting. The campus press and other major news media also publicized the forum. In response the College Republicans took to the airwaves on Spanish-language radio stations for several days to condemn her visit and build an "anti-Castro" demonstration. And right-wing hecklers tried to shout Serrano down.

But, the *Miami Herald* was forced to admit, Serrano "kept her cool—even in the midst of heated Cuban rancor."

Serrano, a researcher at the Center for

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Rolls Royce struck in Scotland

Hundreds of workers at the Rolls Royce plant in East Kilbride, Scotland, staged a one-day strike April 20 protesting the company's plan to eliminate 600 jobs. Another strike is planned soon. Rolls Royce is one of the world's top three aircraft engine producers.

As it moved to slash costs and personnel, company spokespersons reported they have won almost 25 percent of the new engine orders on the world market.

Britain: teachers vote to strike

A National Union of Teachers conference voted to take strike action across England and Wales to fight growing class sizes. Some 1 million primary school children are taught in classes of more than 30, and 100,000 in classes of more than 36.

Labour Party leader Tony Blair joined British prime minister John Major in condemning a walkout by the teachers. A strike would be "wrong and misguided," Blair said in the House of Commons.

New Delhi rejects U.S. pressure

"We are not a banana republic to be told who we should like, invite, or dine with," said a member of India's Parliament responding to U.S. treasury secretary Robert Rubin's criticism of a visit by Iranian president Hashemi Rafsanjani. Iran's president was in India April 16-18, to develop business and political ties with New Delhi.

Rubin, visiting India during the same days, expressed Washington's "extremely strong concern" about Iran to Indian prime minister PV Narasimha Rao. Brushing aside the imperial arrogance of the representative of the Clinton administration, Rao told Rafsanjani, "We hope your visit will be a landmark in our bilateral relations."

N. Korea gov't rejects reactors

Government officials from North Korea walked away from talks with Washington April 20, refusing to accept two light-water nuclear reactors from Seoul. Pyongyang agreed to freeze its nuclear program last October, in exchange for two new reactors to replace an old Russian-made facility along with other economic and diplomatic concessions.

Washington has threatened "the possibility of seeking sanctions" if the North Korean regime breaks the freeze on its nuclear program. Pyongyang, which has previously rejected the U.S. government's insistence that it accept the reactors from Seoul, announced it would "resume operation of some nuclear facilities."

Moscow deeper into Tajik conflict

Moscow is getting deeper into a conflict against guerrilla forces in Tajikistan where it already maintains 25,000 troops to bolster the regime. Tajikistan, with 5.4 million people, is the poorest of the former Soviet republics relying heavily on Moscow for economic aid.

Tajik opposition forces were driven out of the country during a civil war in 1992 and have recently launched several raids from Afghanistan.

The Afghan government protested to the United Nations April 13 that Russian planes invaded their airspace and bombed the town of Taloqan, killing 125 people. Russian officials have denied the military action.

Brazilia boasts of boom

Boasting about a 5 percent economic growth rate for the last three years, Brazilian president Fernando Henrique Cardoso arrived in the United States April 17, for a five-day visit. Cardoso is seeking to attract more investment and expand the government's political influence.

Cardoso plans to lobby for Brazil, with a population of 155 million people, to win a permanent seat on an expanded UN Security Council. In May the regime plans to



Russian soldier wounded in clash along the Tajik/Afghanistan border. Going after Tajik fighters, Russian jets blasted a village in Afghanistan April 20, killing 12 people. "More and more, we are repeating our bitter Afghan experience," said Boris Gromov, who led the Russian army out of Afghanistan.

send 1,100 troops to Angola.

Mexican military is costly item

Mexican economist Jorge López Arevalo recently calculated that the 30,000 soldiers deployed to Chiapas over the past year cost the Mexican economy \$285 million. López further noted that the resources spent on the military in 1994 was equivalent to the total exports of Mexican coffee for the 1993-94 harvest.

"The annual amount spent by the National Defense Secretariat in Chiapas would enable the government to solve most of the social demands made by the Zapatistas: housing, health, food, roads, education, jobs, and land," said López.

Cuban hijacker granted asylum

Leonel Macías González, accused by the Cuban government of hijacking a government boat and killing a naval officer, was granted political asylum in the United States April 17 and released from a detention center in Miami. The Cuban government had appealed the decision to grant Macías González political asylum in February.

Operation Rescue loses suit

Office equipment and other assets were taken from LifeChoices Inc., the national headquarters of anti-abortion rights Oper-

ation Rescue April 19 under a court order obtained by Planned Parenthood of Houston and Southeast Texas. Planned Parenthood won \$1 million in punitive damages from the Dallas-based Operation Rescue and the Houston-based Rescue America in May 1994 after a jury ruled that the groups conspired to hinder Planned Parenthood and nine other clinics during the 1992 Republican National Convention.

The LifeChoices office opened in early April in North Dallas next to A Choice for Women, a clinic that performs abortions.

N.Y. homeless to pay rent

The administration of New York governor George Pataki is proposing to charge homeless people for living in public shelters. This measure would include those receiving Supplemental Security Income, a government program for the aged, disabled, and blind. "Anyone with any income should in fact contribute toward the cost of shelter being provided," said Terrence McGrath, spokesman for the state's Department of Social Services.

"The shelter system does not provide people with the services it should now," said Ramón Carrera, who lives in a shelter. "How do we expect people to pay for a bed that in reality ain't even worth paying for?"

GM scores big profits

The General Motors Corp. reported April 20 that the profits at its North American automotive operations were up 152 percent with first quarter earnings of \$2.2 billion. GM's chief financial officer, J. Michael Losh, pointed out that "the improvement shows what we have been doing on our cost structure."

Overall, the Big Three U.S. automakers earned profits of \$4.3 billion in the quarter compared with \$3.4 billion in the same period last year.

Gulf war syndrome confirmed

The U.S. government, after denying the claims of veterans, now admits that the Gulf war syndrome is a genuine ailment, entitling veterans to disability benefits and subsidized medical care. More than 50,000 veterans have reported symptoms of the illness according to the Pentagon.

Hens and rats tested by Pentagon researchers displayed "textbook symptoms" after being exposed to the same combination of anti-nerve gas pills, insecticides, and pest repellents routinely issued to GIs in the region.

Washington also admits that it has no evidence that chemical or biological weapons were used by Baghdad.

— MAURICE WILLIAMS

THE MILITANT

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The Militant

Vol. 59/No. 18

Closing news date: April 27, 1995

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Published weekly except for one week in December and biweekly from mid-June to mid-August by the Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 410 West St., New York, NY 10014. Telephone: (212) 243-6392; Fax (212) 924-6040.

The Militant can be reached via CompuServe at: 73311,2720 or via Peacenet at: themilitant Internet: 73311.2720@compuserve.com or: themilitant@igc.apc.org

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

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Labor protests flare in Tierra del Fuego

BY HILDA CUZCO

The simmering social tensions in Argentina exploded in mid-April in Tierra del Fuego, the southernmost region of the country. Following the fatal shooting of a worker by the police, thousands of angry unionists took to the streets demanding justice. Labor protests against mass layoffs had erupted there last May.

Similar working-class demonstrations and strikes have broken out in the past month in a dozen Argentine provinces, where conditions working people face are particularly critical. Provincial governments have imposed severe austerity measures and unemployment is growing, having reached a record 12 percent nationally.

In Ushuaia, Tierra del Fuego, 200 workers had occupied the Continental Fugina electronics plant for 10 days. They were demanding their back pay and protesting the announced shutdown of the plant. On April 11, cops evicted the workers with clubs and rubber bullets, wounding 15 and arresting 20.

On leaving work and finding out what had happened at the plant, workers from nearby factories began to pelt the police with rocks. About 100 workers, defying subzero temperatures, marched to the government building and threw rocks, demanding the resignation of the provincial minister of labor and justice, Fulvio Baschera.

The Union Front, General Confederation of Labor, and Metalworkers Union in the province called a 24-hour work stoppage and demonstrations for the following day to protest the repression.

Two thousand workers marched to the police station April 12 to demand the arrested workers be freed. The police answered with tear gas and rubber bullets. Victor Choque, a 37-year-old construction worker, was fatally shot in the head. Sixty workers were wounded, some seriously.

The Metalworkers Union and the Union Front, which includes government employees, teachers, taxi drivers, and sanitation workers, called a work stoppage for April 13. Meanwhile, Governor José Estabillio announced the resignation of minister Baschera.

On Good Friday, 3,000 people held a silent protest march through the streets of Rio Grande. In Ushuaia, 10,000 people attended the wake for Victor Choque. Workers from all the unions took turns holding the coffin. Afterward, 3,000 marched through the streets with Choque's coffin, passing in front of the governor's mansion.

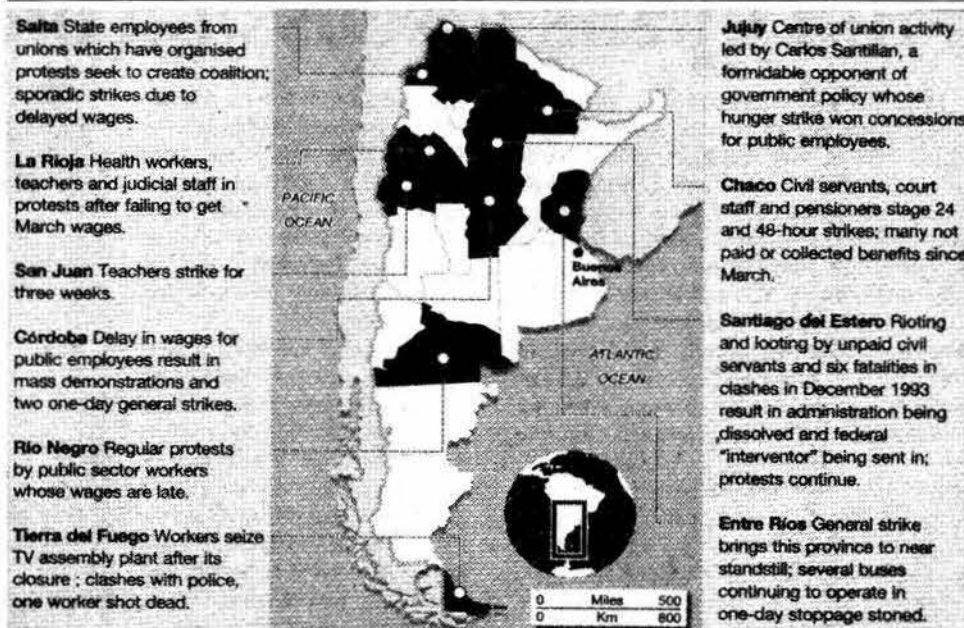
Argentine president Carlos Menem, concerned about his reelection campaign, quickly declared that those responsible for the death of Choque would be "severely punished," adding that his administration "had nothing to do" with the repression in Ushuaia. The other two major capitalist

presidential contenders, José Bordón of the dissident Peronist party FREPASO and Horacio Massaccesi of the Radical Civic Union, denounced Menem for the bloodshed. The elections, which Menem is expected to win, will be held May 14.

Elsewhere, the economic crisis has sparked labor protests in several northern provinces. In San Salvador de Jujuy, 8,000 state employees surrounded the state legislature April 11 demanding the reversal of a government decree that cut municipal workers' pay in the province. Parliament quickly revoked the law. Some 6,000 people demonstrated April 11 in front of the government house in Paraná, Entre Ríos province, demanding their wages for March. They also protested the halving of their pay and denounced Governor Mario Moine's austerity policies. The demonstration brought together public employees, retired workers, and students.

In Córdoba, a major city, unions be-

Argentina: struggles in the provinces



longing to the Movement of Social Action and Organization held a general strike April 18 demanding their back pay. Teachers, court employees, hospital work-

ers, and doctors held a stoppage several days earlier. State workers have also held work stoppages in the provinces of El Chaco and La Rioja.

Washington presses for atomic status quo

BY NAOMI CRAINE

Washington is far from gaining consensus from the 173 other governments involved in month-long negotiations at the United Nations on extending the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Clinton administration is pushing for an indefinite, unconditional extension of the 25-year-old pact, which allows the U.S. government and four other declared nuclear powers — London, Paris, Beijing, and Moscow — to maintain their nuclear arsenals. Other signatories to the agreement are required to renounce all nuclear weapons.

The governments of Indonesia, Nigeria, Venezuela, and several other countries are arguing instead for extending the treaty for a set period of time, probably 25 years, saying that the states with nuclear bombs have not lived up to promises to reduce their arsenals, share peaceful nuclear technology, and give assurances on the use of nuclear weapons. An indefinite extension would "lead to a permanent division of the world into nuclear haves and have-nots," noted Indonesian foreign minister Izhah Ibrahim. His government chairs the Non-Aligned Movement, which has not taken a formal position on the matter.

The treaty should be extended indefinitely because it "creates a more secure world for all its members," declared U.S. vice president Al Gore at the conference. Washington is the only government to have ever actually used nuclear weapons on human beings when it bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in World War II, and it has more of them today than when the NPT went into effect in 1970.

In the weeks before the conference, rep-

resentatives of the Clinton administration traveled the world trying to drum up votes for the indefinite extension. Gore went to Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Oman in late March. Pressing for support for Washington's position, he pledged to the Jordanian government support for writing off Amman's debt to the U.S. government.

Gore's visit to Cairo followed attempts by the U.S. secretary of state, secretary of defense, and other officials to pressure the Egyptian government. But Cairo argued in a meeting of the Arab League that the treaty should not be continued indefinitely while the Israeli regime, which has nuclear weapons, refuses to sign the treaty.

One unresolved question is how the vote on extending the treaty will be carried out. Some of the Third World governments are demanding a secret ballot, while Washington and its backers are pushing for an open vote.

South African foreign minister Alfred Nzo spoke on the third day of the conference. His government "in principle supports the view that the NPT should be extended indefinitely," Nzo said. "There is, however, concern that proper checks and balances should be put in place to ensure that the objectives of the treaty are translated into reality," he added.

"Many countries have, with good reason, been critical about the failures and delays" by the nuclear powers in carrying out their promises, Nzo said. "South Africa therefore believes that a mechanism must be found to address these concerns about the implementation of the treaty."

The South African foreign minister emphasized that "further steps should be

taken to accelerate the pace of nuclear disarmament" by Washington and Moscow. "The time may also be right for considering whether the arsenals of the other Nuclear Weapon States should not be included in this process." The South African government "also urges greater transparency on the part of the Nuclear Weapons States," Nzo said.

In 1992, as the mass movement to bring down the apartheid regime surged, the National Party government in South Africa acknowledged that it had a nuclear weapons program, dismantled it, and signed the NPT. "Apartheid South Africa...embarked on a nuclear weapons program. Democratic South Africa sees the international and regional security being achieved by complete nuclear disarmament," Nzo concluded.

In preparation for treaty negotiations, the UN Security Council passed a resolution April 11 with the stated purpose of assuring help to non-nuclear-weapon states that sign the NPT if they come under nuclear attack. This pledge consists primarily of urging other governments "to take appropriate measures in response to a request from the victim for technical, medical, scientific or humanitarian assistance."

Officials of the five "nuclear weapon states" also made statements leading up to the conference that they would not use nukes against non-nuclear signers.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher said April 5, "The United States reaffirms that it will not use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states parties to the treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons except in the case of an invasion or any other attack on the United States, its territories, its armed forces or other troops, its allies, or on a state toward which it has a security commitment, carried out or sustained by such a non-nuclear weapon state in association or alliance with a nuclear weapon state."

Beijing was the only government of the five to pledge unconditionally that it will not use nukes first.

In other news, the Cuban government signed on to the Tlatelolco Treaty March 25. The 1967 agreement bans nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. Cuban foreign minister Roberto Robaina stressed that Washington, the only nuclear power in the Americas, maintains a hostile policy toward Cuba, including illegally occupying a portion of Cuban territory at the Guantánamo naval base. Through this area, Robaina explained, U.S. vessels pass carrying nuclear weapons. This will have to be resolved, he said, as a condition to the island remaining in the treaty.

"We support a complete ban on nuclear arms as the only way to guarantee long-lasting peace and safety to everyone," Robaina said. "Those who are called upon to honor this principle first are the so-called nuclear powers." Cuba is not a signatory to the NPT, but the talks at the United Nations have gotten coverage in the Cuban media. Cuban officials are attending the NPT conference as observers.

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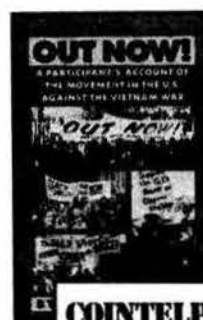
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Film opens discussion on danger of anti-Semitism

FORT MADISON, Iowa — When the movie *Schindler's List* was shown on television here last weekend, it opened a discussion on the nature of anti-Semitism and the fascist agenda. Most guys were blown away by the scale and brutality of the Nazi pogroms and concentration camps. However, one man offered a different view.

First, he insisted, nowhere near 6 million Jews were murdered; "do the math, it's just not possible." Second, it was wartime and "people die in war." Third, he said that 1930s Germany was a lot like the



Mark
Curtis

United States today, with certain forces, especially Jews creating corruption, profiteering, and filth that is dragging the country down, and Adolf Hitler took extreme actions to stop it.

Although this is the fascist viewpoint with all the trimmings, explicit or implied remarks blaming a shadowy Jewish conspiracy for today's economic breakdowns are being put forward by a number of politicians. Rightist demagogue and Republican presidential candidate Patrick Buchanan likes to emphasize that it was U.S. treasury secretary Robert Rubin who

put together the Mexican peso bailout package. Rubin is Jewish and formerly of the Wall Street firm Goldman Sachs. Buchanan is joined by other right-wing political figures like Louis Farrakhan and Pat Robertson in thinly-veiled Jew-baiting.

Jew-hatred has been a constant plank in every fascist and rightist movement that has its eyes on capturing state power. The reason is explained in Daniel Guerin's book *Fascism and Big Business*. Anti-Semitism, Guerin says, is the pass key. The pass key works because of the widespread myth that Jews control the banks.

The fascists' anti-Semitism is their "anti-capitalist" pass key to the millions who have an instinctive hatred for the rich, especially loan-sharking bankers. Fascism is a movement aimed at grabbing power and destroying the unions and the political organizations of the working class. It is based on the middle class — not the wage workers, but not the rich either — the small business people, farmers, professionals, etc. *Schindler's List* doesn't explain it this way, so I did. One guy wondered if Hitler could have been stopped before the bloodbath began. Another said he felt Buchanan was "dangerous, especially to the prisoner populations."

I was challenged by the guy with the



Nazi storm troopers occupy Berlin union offices in 1933. Opposing bigotry, racism, and sexism is needed if labor movement is going to defeat capitalism and its rescuer, fascism.

right-wing ideas who recalled the Jewish-sounding names of big shots in banking, entertainment, and television. But having Alan Greenspan run the Federal Reserve doesn't make it a Jewish-controlled agency anymore than Bill Clinton in the White House makes it a Baptist-controlled presidency. The U.S. ruling class — the capitalist families who own industry and banking — are not Jewish. That's a historical fact.

I don't see Jew-hatred on the rise in the

attitudes of most working people. Nevertheless, the economic slide means more anti-Semitic propaganda by rightists fumbling for their pass key.

Opposing bigotry, racism, and sexism is needed if the labor movement is going to defeat capitalism and its rescuer, fascism. Oscar Schindler rescued about 1,000 people, but millions were butchered by the Nazi regime. That's why we should arm ourselves politically now, before the skirmishes become big class battles.

Curtis demands prison let him receive pamphlet

Continued from front page
help advance this campaign.

Curtis is currently being held in lockup in a segregation unit at the Iowa State Penitentiary, the state's only maximum security prison. He was victimized by guards on trumped-up charges of assaulting another inmate at the end of August 1994. At the time, he was working with his supporters to organize an international public campaign to press the Iowa Parole Board for his release. Curtis was shackled, brought before a kangaroo prison hearing officer, and convicted after a half-hour hearing where he was denied the right to confront his accusers. He was sentenced to 30 days "in the hole" and a year in lockup, confined to his 5' by 7' cell 23 hours a day.

The denial of the pamphlet to Curtis—like throwing him into lockup—is a conscious political attack. It is aimed at breaking his spirit, cutting him off from the outside world, derailing his fight for freedom, and demoralizing his supporters.

Prior to this, Curtis has had little trouble receiving literature, without any question being raised about being on any "approved list." He regularly receives basic Marxist literature, pamphlets about other defense cases, books on current political events — like the recent autobiography of Nelson Mandela — a variety of newspapers and magazines, and occasional novels. In fact, the day the pamphlet was rejected, Curtis was given three other books sent to him, including *Engine* by Gore Vidal and *Rebellion of the Hanged* by B. Traven. None of the three given to Curtis are on the approved list.

In an interview with Curtis, he stated that in the past he has seen the "approved list" of literature referred to in the prison form. It is roughly 100 books and magazines. Ironically, Curtis said, many of the titles on the list are books that were sent to him and approved by the state Department of Corrections when he was being held in the Iowa State Men's Reformatory at Anamosa a number of years ago. On the list, for instance, is a previous Pathfinder pamphlet about Curtis, *The Frame-Up of Mark Curtis: A Packinghouse Worker's Fight for Justice*, by Margaret Jayko.

Two years ago authorities at the Iowa State Penitentiary decided to change its policy on literature, and began sending all prisoners' magazines and books to the state Corrections office for review. After a public outcry and widespread media atten-



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Supporters of Mark Curtis used new pamphlet on his case to help win backing for Curtis's fight at April 9 rally for women's rights in Washington, D.C.

tion, the policy was reversed.

The rejection of the pamphlet comes shortly after Curtis filed a lawsuit in state court against prison officials for violating his rights in railroading him into lockup. Just the week before, Curtis told prison officials that he was appealing a new policy that denies him any time off from lockup for good behavior.

It also comes in the context of stepped-up attacks on the rights of all prisoners. More prisons are being built, the right to appeal convictions or challenge prison conditions in court is under increasing attack, prisoners are being denied the right to exercise, and use of the death penalty is expanding.

The rejection of the pamphlet comes one month after officials at the Iowa State Penitentiary convened a special meeting with the inmates' Prisoners Advisory Council (PAC), where Acting Warden Paul Hedgepath told them the prison is considering a series of steps to crack down on inmates. The PAC reported in its March 24 newsletter that among the threatened changes are shutting off the cable television between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. and forcing inmates to wear either earplugs or headphones all day. Inmates in lockup are a special target for the changes being weighed. Under consideration, Hedgepath said, are banning smoking in the lockup units and beginning "double

bunking" to house more prisoners — two to each 5' by 7' cell.

On April 23, The Mark Curtis Defense Committee issued a call for "an immedi-

ate, emergency campaign over the next two weeks — from April 24 to May 7 — to put public pressure on the Iowa Department of Corrections and officials at the State Penitentiary in an effort to get them to relent and grant Mark the pamphlet, and to press against any further efforts to politically censor the literature or correspondence Mark receives.

"Send a letter or fax today to Iowa authorities urging that the pamphlet *Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?* be released to him now," the defense committee appeal says, "and any further effort to politically censor the mail or books he receives be halted."

The committee asks that messages be sent to Sally Chandler Halford, Director, Department of Corrections, Capitol Annex, 523 East 12th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50309, fax (515) 281-7345, and to Paul Hedgepath, Acting Warden, Iowa State Penitentiary, Box 316, Fort Madison, Iowa 52627, fax (319) 372-6967. Copies should be faxed to the defense committee at (515) 243-9869.

For further information, or to order a copy of the pamphlet denied to Curtis for yourself, contact the defense committee at Box 1048, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

SWP leadership meeting supports Curtis fight

BY NAOMI CRAINE

NEW YORK — The emergency campaign to demand that Iowa prison authorities allow Mark Curtis to receive a copy of the new Pathfinder pamphlet on his case deserves the backing of all fighters for democratic rights, concluded the National Committee of the Socialist Workers Party. Meeting here April 22-24, the party's leadership committee voted to back the protest campaign launched by the Mark Curtis Defense Committee 100 percent.

Leadership delegations from communist leagues in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden, and the United Kingdom, as well as a representative of the Communist Organizing Committee in France, attended the meeting. All have fought for Curtis's release, and will be taking on this new campaign. A representative of the Young Socialists leadership also attended the meeting. The YS

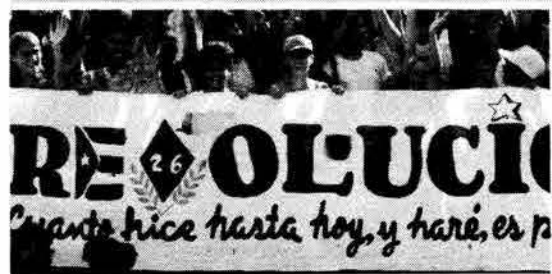
National Committee had recently made getting out the new pamphlet one of the main campaigns of the organization.

Responding to this latest attack on Curtis by reaching out to others involved in struggles today — from fighters demanding the release of Irish political prisoners, to defenders of the Cuban revolution and supporters of women's rights, to those protesting President Bill Clinton's plans to curtail democratic rights in the wake of the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City — will make Iowa officials pay a price for their outrageous actions.

The socialist workers will join with other Mark Curtis supporters around the world over the next two weeks in urging unionists, farmers, political activists, and youth to write or fax Iowa prison officials demanding Curtis be given his copy of *Why Is Mark Curtis Still in Prison?*



international campaign to win new readers



Militant 2,950
Perspectiva Mundial 675
New International 1,200

sold 22%
should be 30%

Earth Day events, meetings to defend Cuba boost sales



Militant/Hilda Cuzco

Sales teams participated in Earth Day festival in New York and other events around the world

BY LAURA GARZA

A protest against anti-immigrant measures in Toronto, Earth Day events throughout the United States, meetings to defend the Cuban revolution in France, these are some of the events supporters of the international campaign to win new readers of the socialist press have been part of recently. The campaign to sell subscriptions to the *Militant* and the monthly Spanish-language *Perspectiva Mundial*, and to sell copies of the Marxist magazine *New International* has been in progress for three weeks, and 22 percent of the goal has been met. This means a stepped-up pace is needed to make the goal in the remaining seven weeks of the drive.

Supporters of the socialist press report many discussions about the recent bombing in Oklahoma and the spate of proposals being floated to curb democratic rights. In Toronto, where the cops kidnapped and interrogated a member of the Young Socialists, supporters are on a campaign to protest this attack on democratic rights. These discussions are a good opportunity to point out that the socialist press is an important source of information about the kinds of struggles working people are engaged in — from strikes, to marches in defense of affirmative action, to protests in support of abortion rights — that government authorities are attempting to undercut through limits on our rights to organize.

In the next few weeks Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams will be touring the country. For many years, Adams was denied the right to speak in the United States as Washington gave backing to London's colonial policies in the north of Ireland. He will be speaking in several cities about the historic breakthrough that the Irish freedom struggle has recently made. The socialist press has been circulating at events in support of Irish political prisoners held in the last few weeks and the upcoming tour gives another opportunity to do more of the same.

In several cities supporters are organizing to get days off from work and join special sales teams to get out in the region. Supporters of the socialist press from Atlanta, Pittsburgh, and Morgantown, West Virginia, recently put together a team to visit parts of southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky. They will be selling at mine portals and in surrounding communities. As one of the team members participated in a recent trip to Cuba the supporters of the *Militant* are hoping to set up some house meetings and other discussions to talk about revolutionary Cuba. Other teams are being planned to reach coal miners in southern Illinois, and meatpackers and textile workers in the southeastern United States.

In France, a visit by a member of the editorial board of *New International*, Jonathan Silberman, helped kick off the effort to sell the magazine. Some 90 people heard Silberman speak March 31 and April 1 on the Cuban revolution today at three campus meetings and at a citywide forum. He was joined on the platform by a representative of France-Cuba, an organization in solidarity with Cuba. Two subscriptions to the *Militant* and 11 issues of the French and Spanish editions of *New International* were sold.

Militant supporters in New Zealand sold 12 copies of the paper and one subscription in two hours when they set up a table in the northern town of Kaitia April 2. Many buyers were interested in the coverage of land occupations by Maoris, one of which has been taking place for several weeks at Takahue, just south of Kaitia.

In December last year a series of protests and a march through Kaitia were held to demand a halt to the dropping of a poison in Northland forests. Protests in February of this year, which saw three quarters of Kaitia's population of 8,000 march against plans

to downgrade the local hospital, have been successful in putting these plans on hold.

Militant supporters spent the rest of the day visiting Takahue where members of the Te Paatu hapu (sub-tribe) are occupying an unused school to demand return of the title to the land on which it stands.

About 8,000 youth attended Earth Jam '95 near Atlanta. Despite heavy rains during the early part of the day, several hundred visited a display of tables with information from various environmental and other groups. Many were attracted to a table set up by the Young Socialists and Socialist Workers Party when they saw a sign that read, "Capitalism destroys the environment. Join the fight for socialism." There was also a display on the international youth festival called by the Union of Young Communists in Cuba for this August. "I've been debating socialism versus capitalism and that we need to look at the world in a different way," said one young man who came by the table. He bought a copy of the *Militant* and the pamphlet *Socialism and Man* by Che Guevara.

A group of young women who had just formed a feminist group on their campus were interested in getting a speaker on the case of Mark Curtis, a unionist and socialist framed up for his political views. They also signed up for information on the Young Socialists. Three people bought subscriptions to the *Militant* and one bought a copy of *New International* no. 10 with the article "Imperialism's march toward fascism and war."

Supporters of the socialist press sold 44 single copies and 4 subscriptions to the *Militant* and 2 copies of *New International* no. 10 to 2,500 activists protesting the right-wing Human Life International convention in Montreal.

Derek Jeffers in France, Felicity Coggan in New Zealand, and Ellen Haywood in Atlanta contributed to this article.

	Militant			Perspectiva Mundial			New International		
	sold	goal	%	sold	goal	%	sold	goal	%
Puerto Rico	1	2	50%	1	8			5	
Iceland	7	15	47%	1	1		1	3	
Sweden	14	40	35%	3	15		26	40	
Australia	13	40	33%	2	6		4	15	
Canada									
Vancouver	27	70	39%	2	8		7	20	
Montreal	17	75	23%	2	25		1	45	
Toronto	15	85	18%	4	15		12	45	
Total	59	230	26%	8	48		20	110	
France	2	10	20%		5		11	20	
Greece	2	10	20%		1		1	4	
New Zealand									
Auckland	18	80	23%		6		2	20	
Wellington	2	10	20%					4	
Christchurch	6	40	15%	1	2		2	10	
Total	26	130	20%	1	8		4	34	
United States									
Greensboro	31	70	44%	2	8			20	
Houston	29	80	36%	3	15		7	20	
Washington DC	24	80	30%	5	30		9	35	
Boston	29	100	29%	4	30		7	35	
Seattle	25	90	28%	3	15		6	25	
Salt Lake City	27	105	26%	6	20		17	35	
Detroit	23	95	24%	1	10		3	28	
Peoria	12	50	24%		2			20	
Miami	24	105	23%	10	45		16	60	
Morgantown	12	55	22%	1	2		3	20	
Los Angeles	37	180	21%	28	90		32	90	
Des Moines	16	85	19%	6	36			30	
Chicago	24	130	18%	4	30		1	50	
Pittsburgh	19	105	18%	2	12		7	30	
Atlanta	15	90	17%	4	20		3	25	
Philadelphia	19	115	17%	3	30		8	45	
Twin Cities	19	120	16%	4	17			35	
Brooklyn	19	130	15%	4	40		15	65	
Cleveland	10	65	15%	3	12			20	
New York	20	135	15%	3	30		11	75	
Birmingham	10	70	14%	5	5		1	20	
San Francisco	21	150	14%	3	45		14	75	
Newark	17	130	13%	3	35		5	60	
Tucson	1	10	10%	1	2			5	
Cincinnati		12	0%		2			3	
New Haven		15			3			3	
Total	483	2357	20%	108	586		165	929	
Britain									
London	20	70	29%	3	5		9	30	
Manchester	5	60	8%		4		4	25	
Sheffield		10			1			10	
Total	25	140	18%	3	10		13	65	
Belgium		3	0%		4			10	
Other	6			1					
International	638	2977	22%	127	692		245	1235	
Should be	885	2950	30%	202	675		360	1200	
IN THE UNION									
AUSTRALIA									
AWU-FIME		2			1		1		
AMWU (Metal)		1			1				
Total		3			2				
CANADA									
CAW				1					
CEP	2								
IAM	1								
USWA	1								
Total	4			1					
NEW ZEALAND									
EU	1	5	20%		1			2	
MWU		4	0%					1	
Total	1	9	11%		1			3	
SWEDEN									
Food workers		2					3	4	
Metal workers	1	2	50%				2	2	
Transport		1						3	
Total	1	5	20%				5	9	
U.S.									
UTU	26	85	31%		7			12	
UAW	24	100	24%	2	10		9	25	
IAM	16	75	21%	3	15			33	
USWA	8	40	20%	1	3		1	7	
ACTWU/ILGWU	5	30	17%	3	24			18	
UFCW	2	15	13%		25			40	
OCAW	6	55	11%		6			33	
UMWA	1	23	4%					12	
Total	88	423	21%	9	90		10	180	
UNION TOTALS	94	439	21%	9	92		6	192	

ACTWU-Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEEU-Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AWU-FIME-Australian Workers Union; AMWU(Food)-Australian Workers Union; AMWU(Metal) Australian Workers Union; CAW-Canadian Auto Workers; EU-Engineers Union; IAM-International Association of Machinists; ILGWU-International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MWU-Meat Workers Union; NUM-National Union of Mineworkers; OCAW-Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT-National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU-Transport and General Workers Union; UAW-United Auto Workers; UFBGWU-United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union; UFCW-United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA-United Mine Workers of America; USWA-United Steelworkers of America; UTU-United Transportation Union.

RCMP seizes youth

Continued from front page

Toronto at 3:00 p.m. April 20. They asked to speak to Emad, a volunteer staffer for the store.

Emad asked them to leave the store. The agents began to interrogate him about his views on Cuba and said they wanted to ask him about "a telephone call." When Emad refused to submit to an interrogation, the agents warned him things would get worse for him.

At about 7:00 p.m., another RCMP agent, joined by one of those who had previously barged in, entered the Pathfinder bookstore, again asking for Emad. At first they refused to identify themselves as police officers. When they did, they were asked to leave the store, which they refused to do.

Upon seeing Emad emerge from the back, the two agents lunged for him. Volunteer bookstore staffers tried to protect Emad by getting between him and the officers. They asked if the agents had a warrant and getting no reply demanded that they leave. The agents said they were not arresting Emad but he must come with them.

The agents pushed the volunteers into the bookstore office. In the process, they knocked John Steele, the Communist League candidate in the upcoming Ontario provincial elections, to the floor.

They threatened two of Emad's defenders with arrest for obstruction and shoved other volunteers, including one in a wheelchair. The cops succeeded in grabbing Emad's jacket and arm. He protested and demanded to see their warrant. Both officers flashed their RCMP badges and said, "This is our warrant."

They dragged Emad out the front door where two other cops were waiting and put him in a minivan with tinted windows. The RCMP agents drove the garment worker several blocks away, parked the van, and began to harass and try to intimidate him. Among their questions: Have you ever been to Oklahoma? Do you know how to make a bomb? Do you promote terrorism? Do you belong to an Iranian organization? What is your religion?

They also demanded to know what he did at the Pathfinder bookstore, claiming it is not an ordinary bookstore. And for the second time that day they questioned him about why he had gone to Cuba.

Unsatisfied with how their harassment was going, they told Emad, "We are the top police force in the country — you should answer our questions; you came to our country and should live by the rules." They also wanted to know, "Why were those people protecting you?"

It was only after attorney Kellerman was allowed to talk to Emad in the van that the cops relented, telling Emad he was free to go. When Kellerman asked Emad why they had detained him, the agents, illegally listening in on the conversation, instructed Emad to tell them it was an "immigration" matter. After Kellerman said that couldn't be, that Emad was a Canadian citizen, agents scribbled out a note instructing Emad to answer "National

Security."

Before letting Emad go, one of the RCMP agents warned him not to take action with his lawyer. "Right now the four of us are real friendly, but that could change like this," he said, snapping his fingers. Another cop told Emad, "We really are friendly," and that if he was short of funds, to give them a call anytime.

Immediately following the attack, supporters of democratic rights mobilized to defend Emad and the Pathfinder bookstore. The Canadian Arab Federation, Cuba solidarity activists, unionists, and others denounced the government police action at an April 22 press conference.

That same day, Emad spoke to a demonstration by 250 people organized by the Toronto Coalition Against Racism to protest Canadian government immigration policies. Many demonstrators offered support. A public meeting that night on defending democratic rights sponsored by the Militant Labor Forum drew 45 people.

Emad is appealing to unions, civil liberties and democratic rights organizations, solidarity groups, and democratic-minded individuals to protest the RCMP assault.

Emad explained, "This attack is a threat to everyone's right to engage in political activity. It has only one aim — intimidating anyone who is opposed to the policies of the Canadian government."

"Think of the crimes those agents committed," he said. "They were trespassing without a search warrant or arrest warrant; they are guilty of assault, kidnapping, and harassment. I wasn't allowed to call a lawyer. I wasn't informed of my rights, or charged with an offense, and they wouldn't give me privacy when my lawyer reached me. And their concern over 'a telephone call' raises the question



Militant/John Sarge

Nojan Emad speaking at April 22 demonstration in Toronto protesting Canadian government's proposed head tax on immigrants.

— was my home phone tapped or the same at the Pathfinder bookstore?

"Far from breaking me, which was their goal, this attack has only strengthened my resolve to fight injustice here and anywhere in the world," Emad said.

Emad is asking that supporters of democratic rights demand that those agents responsible be charged and prosecuted for their crimes and that the "investigation" against him be ended.

Emad had just started a new job in an unorganized garment shop the day he was attacked by the RCMP. "I didn't go to work the next day, explaining I had an emergency," said Emad. But over the weekend, news about his case appeared in the major dailies in Toronto and on several

radio stations. When he went in to work on Monday, most workers already knew what had happened and greeted him warmly. His supervisor told him if he needed to take some time off, he could. About 45 co-workers took Emad to lunch to find out more about the RCMP attack.

Protest messages can be sent to: Solicitor General of Canada Herb Gray, 340 Laurier Ave. West, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0P8; Phone: (613) 991-3283. Fax: (613) 952-2240; and to the RCMP Commissioner, 1200 Vanier Parkway, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0R2. Phone (613) 993-8887.

Copies should be sent to Pathfinder Bookstore, 827 Bloor St. W., Toronto, Ont., M6G 1M1. Phone/Fax: (416) 533-4324.

'I have a right to my political beliefs,' says youth at Toronto press conference

BY ROBERT SIMMS

TORONTO — "What happened here in this store is a most flagrant assault on basic democratic rights," stated Basil Mustafa, anti-racism coordinator of the Canadian Arab Federation, at an April 22 press conference held at the Toronto Pathfinder bookstore. "The idea behind these acts is to instill fear in people who want to fight for change."

The media conference was called to protest a Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) raid on the bookstore two days earlier and the illegal seizure and forcible detention of Young Socialists member Nojan Emad by four RCMP agents.

Dave Bleakney, chief steward of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) at the South Central mail sorting station and a leader of Worker to Worker/Canada-Cuba Labour Solidarity, also spoke. Bob Kellerman, Emad's lawyer; Frank Showler, a Cuba solidarity

activist; Mark Gilsdorf, a leader of the Young Socialists in the United States; and John Steele, Communist League candidate in the upcoming Ontario provincial elections, spoke as well. Steele was also assaulted during the RCMP raid.

The *Toronto Sun*, one of the major dailies, covered the event, as did national radio of the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. (CBC). The *Toronto Star* interviewed Emad later that afternoon. Both papers ran articles on the case the next day. Several radio stations and wire services, in addition to CBC Radio, picked up a press release and fact sheet. Papers across the country have noted the story.

Emad led off the press conference by relating the facts of his seizure, which his lawyer described as a kidnapping.

"What are they scared of?" Emad demanded. "Are they scared because I went to Cuba to find out the truth about the Cuban revolution and the example work-

ers and farmers in Cuba set for young people today?

"Working people have rights. I have a right to my political beliefs and these rights were violated. Those who did this must be fought."

Steele demanded that the RCMP agents be charged and prosecuted for their illegal acts.

Mustafa related how a reporter for a major newspaper had asked him the day before how he felt about the Oklahoma City bombing, the implication being that Arabs don't have the same human feelings as others. "I told the reporter I felt the same way I felt when I saw Israelis bombing Lebanon or Palestinian homes, or when the United States bombed the shelter in Baghdad and bodies were being pulled from it," he said.

Mustafa also denounced the anti-immigration policies of the Canadian government and said that the attack on Emad should be seen in that context.

Kellerman said the attack on Emad was a clear case of "unlawful confinement and assault, on the face of it."

"Unlawful confinement is a very serious offense...and it's even more serious when you have agents of the state scooping people out of bookstores and dragging them off against their will," he said.

Kellerman pointed out that when police spot a pretext like the Oklahoma bombing, they "use this as an opportunity to intimidate people, which is a tradition in the RCMP."

Dave Bleakney related how CUPW activists in Toronto and Vancouver strongly suspected the RCMP were spying on their union in the 1970s and '80s, and the police have not satisfactorily turned over their files.

The files union members got were mostly blacked out, he told the press. "We need some answers," he said, on "whether people who visit Cuba regularly, like myself," are being spied on and picked up.

Showler related how Canadian secret police had interrogated two people in Vancouver, a doctor and a businessman who had established contracts with Cuba, and advised them to quit their economic interests with Cuba. "These kinds of things have to be made public," he said.

—YOUNG SOCIALISTS AROUND THE WORLD—

'Protest attack on democratic rights'

The following are excerpts of a statement read by Young Socialists National Committee member Mark Gilsdorf at the April 22 press conference protesting the illegal seizure and interrogation of Toronto YS member Nojan Emad.

Members of the Young Socialists, together with fighting workers, farmers, and youth from cities across Canada and the United States vigorously protest the blatant attack on the civil liberties and basic democratic rights of Nojan Emad by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police....

Hoping to ride a wave of anti-Arab hysteria following the April 19 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City, the capitalist class, its government in Ottawa, and their armed thugs in the RCMP sought to push a little further in their efforts to curtail the rights working people have fought for and won....

Following the arrest of a suspect in the

Oklahoma bombing, U.S. president Bill Clinton announced that "justice for the killers would be swift, certain, and severe" and that he would be seeking the death penalty in the case... This is the same president who during his first week in office dropped bombs on public hotels in Iraq. This is the same president who detained thousands of Haitians and Cubans in concentration camps at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and together with his attorney general, Janet Reno, incinerated the Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas. This is his meaning of swift and severe justice. This is the threat they seek to hold over the heads of anyone who dares to stand up, think for themselves and fight back.

It was Nojan's trip to Cuba, as a participant in the International Youth Brigade to Cuba, that interested the RCMP... One truth he found in Cuba was that the working class there did away with the practice of disappearances and political kidnaps-

pings in 1959 when they overthrew the U.S.-backed dictator Batista who used these tactics as standard operating procedure....

Another interesting fact is that three participants in the same brigade, upon returning to the United States, had their passports seized by the U.S. government. This attack against Emad was carried out for the same reasons, by a government that is afraid of workers and youth learning the truth about Cuba.

The RCMP and their masters in Ottawa have miscalculated this time. The Young Socialists pledges to take Nojan Emad's message of resistance to the picket lines of trade unionists, to the protests of students, and everywhere people are standing up.

We join with Emad's supporters in demanding the immediate arrest and prosecution of the thugs who carried out this attack, and an end to the harassment of Nojan Emad.

Gov't takes aim at affirmative action

BY LAURA GARZA

From recent Supreme Court rulings to state and federal legislative actions, an offensive against affirmative action is opening up. Democratic and Republican Party politicians are entertaining a spate of proposals to scrap existing programs, testing the waters for how far they can go in a broadside attack on measures aimed at advancing women, Blacks, Latinos, and other oppressed nationalities.

In late February President Bill Clinton ordered an "intense and urgent review" of all government affirmative action programs. When delegates to a state Democratic Party convention in California chanted, "No retreat" on affirmative action, he implored them to consider that, "this is a psychologically difficult time for a lot of white males."

Rulings undercut equal rights

In April, the Supreme Court left standing two lower court rulings undercutting affirmative action programs. One case centered on the Birmingham, Alabama, fire department. In 1974 few Blacks had been hired as firefighters and none were supervisors in an area where the workforce was 28 percent Black. A program was enacted to promote white and Black firefighters on a one-to-one basis until the number of Black lieutenants reached 28 percent, a target that was met in 1989. While no firefighters lost jobs and promotions were delayed in most cases by only a matter of months, 14 white firefighters challenged the plan. They lost initially, but an appeals court found that while the Birmingham government had "compelling" interest in remedying the effects of past discrimination, the plan was not "narrowly tailored" enough and the city should have sought less drastic alternatives.

In a Pittsburgh case, a white engineer, Frederick Claus, challenged a company decision to promote a Black employee. The case stemmed from a Duquesne Light Co. affirmative action program enacted under pressure from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which cited the company's 1987 records showing that only 2 of 82 middle and upper management positions were held by minorities. While the jury determined the Black employee was qualified, which no one challenged, they found the company hadn't properly followed guidelines.

Although neither case is considered a



Women who fought their way into jobs at the Chicago fire department, 1988. Recent studies confirm discrimination against women, Blacks, Latinos, Asians, Indians, and others in the workforce, highlighting continued gap in wages and unemployment rates when compared with whites and men.

landmark decision, many U.S. companies may take advantage of the Supreme Court's action to drag their feet in implementing programs rectifying past and present discriminatory practices.

The Justice Department has recently weighed in against a program at Illinois State University in Normal designed to train women and minorities as building service workers, mostly janitors. The workforce previously had few women or minorities. The Justice Department is challenging the university because only women and minorities are being considered for the special program. Sixty women and minorities have been hired through this program between May 1987 and January 1991.

In California, where Gov. Pete Wilson has announced a plan to abolish all state boards that monitor and promote affirmative action, there is an attempt to get the legislature to place an initiative against affirmative action on the ballot.

Meanwhile, Clinton has already begun implementing a retreat on several programs. The Justice Department recently advised the Commerce Department not to enact a fellowship program aimed at mi-

nority business students. The Office of Federal Procurement Policy is proposing reporting changes that would make it more difficult to know if large government contractors are meeting federal goals for awarding subcontracts to minority companies.

At the same time a series of studies have been released documenting the real status of women, Blacks, Latinos, Asians, Indians, and others in the workforce today, highlighting the continued gap in pay and unemployment rates when compared with whites and men.

According to the Census Bureau, in 1993 the median income for Black men employed full time was \$23,020 compared to the \$31,090 made by white men.

Glass Ceiling report

Evidence of what happens when hiring and promotion decisions are left to the discretion of bosses was the subject of a report studying upper level management released by the Federal Glass Ceiling Commission. The report showed that while women are close to 46 percent of the workforce they represent only 3 percent to 5 percent of top management at Fortune

1000 firms. Two-thirds of the overall population and 57 percent of the workforce is female, of an oppressed nationality, or both, but top management is 95 percent white and male.

However, the report stated, "The overwhelming majority of CEOs interviewed...think of the glass ceiling as something that used to affect women — white and nonwhite — but that is no longer a real problem for them."

The report gives breakdowns in average salaries for managers in a variety of industries. For example, Hispanic males in manufacturing in California have an average annual salary of \$41,456 compared to \$58,666 for whites; and for females it is \$27,773 for Hispanics and \$31,662 for whites.

The report also paints a picture of the situation facing those who have historically been most marginalized. The per capita income on the 10 largest reservations of Native Americans was in the range of \$3,100 to \$4,700 annually in 1990. Fifty-six percent of American Indian households earned less than \$15,000 per year. Unemployment on reservation and land trust areas was 25 percent.

Black workers are more than twice as likely as whites to be unemployed, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, with the 1993 unemployment rate at 12.9 percent compared to 6 percent for whites, and Hispanics hovering in between the two. For Blacks and Hispanics, one in 10 were employed only part time for economic reasons, compared to one in 20 white workers.

Blacks more likely to be dismissed

Another study noted Black federal employees were more than twice as likely to be dismissed as other workers. While minorities make up 28 percent of the federal civilian workforce, they were 52 percent of those discharged in 1992.

Many of the company officials interviewed by the Glass Ceiling Commission admitted that without federal guidelines they would not enact any of the programs now in place. "If you relieve them of the burden of applying the law, they won't do it," said Bernard Anderson, assistant secretary of labor for employment standards.

The Glass Ceiling Commission issued no recommendations and won't until November. Likewise, while the Clinton administration's review of government affirmative action programs is close to being completed, the White House is in no rush to launch a frontal assault on these hard-fought-for rights. Administration spokespeople have raised the idea that they might set up a bipartisan panel to further study the matter. In an interview with the *Los Angeles Times*, Clinton explained that such commissions are good at "helping to resolve contentious issues."

Reflecting similar uncertainty about how far to push, Rep. Newt Gingrich said he would "rather talk about how do we replace group affirmative action with effective help for individuals, rather than just talk about wiping out affirmative action by itself."

The discussion around affirmative action continues on campuses and in the workplace. Students in California, where some of the most severe attacks are being talked about by Democratic and Republican Party politicians, have begun organizing meetings, debates, and some marches to defend affirmative action programs. In New Jersey, at Princeton University, students occupied the president's office April 20-21. They demanded tenure for professors in Asian-American and Hispanic studies, more materials on those subjects in the library, and a center for ethnic studies.

At Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, about 200 students demonstrated April 12 to demand an Asian-American studies program, and more than a dozen students began a hunger strike to press their fight. Seventeen percent of Northwestern's undergraduates who are U.S. citizens are Asian-American.

N.Y.C. slashes relief for thousands

BY MAURICE WILLIAMS

New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani proudly announced at a news conference April 18 that nearly 60 percent of applicants to the city's Home Relief program were rejected during the first three months of the year, thanks to a tough new screening process. The mayor added that the new measures also cut the total number of people applying for benefits by 27 percent from last year.

The new process, which is being used only in the Home Relief program for childless able-bodied adults, forces applicants to undergo abusive interviews to determine their identity, medical situation, personal resources, and living situation.

Only 7,658 applications have been accepted so far this year, compared with 19,450 during the same period last year, Giuliani pointed out. The city rejected 10,151 people out of 17,809 applicants for Home Relief benefits — a rate of 57 percent.

Many of the applicants are not told why their appeals are rejected. City officials claim people are giving improper addresses, Social Security numbers, or they fail to reveal other income. Many of those who were rejected because of bad addresses were homeless and could not provide an address, said Liz Krueger, associate director of the Community Food Resource Center.

"They may have been unable to docu-

ment your residence, but it doesn't mean you lied about it," she told the *New York Times*. "It means they couldn't find the house or they rang the doorbell twice and you weren't there, or the manager didn't know you because you weren't on the lease."

Krueger said the new process has been made "so complex to apply that it's sort of like setting up a New York City marathon." People are now forced to go to several offices over a 45-day period to fill out forms and to be interviewed.

Johnny Howell commented on the insulting treatment he received during his interview with a welfare official. "The dude asked me a lot personal questions, like how did you become homeless, and how do you clean yourself," Howell said his application was denied, but he was not given a reason why.

Another applicant, Mildred Williams, said she was rejected because "an investigator stopped by when I wasn't home" and "was not invited in." Williams, who was out looking for work that day, was told that "the people who answered the door were uncooperative."

Giuliani is threatening to remove thousands of people from the current Home Relief rolls in a crackdown projected for later this year. Calling welfare "a very user-friendly system," the mayor said benefits had become too easy to get. "It was a system saying, please come and take the

money," he said.

New York governor George Pataki attended Giuliani's news conference and said he hoped to apply the same program statewide and eventually expand it for those who receive Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

While there have been almost daily assaults on welfare policies from big-business politicians under the guise of budget cutting, in reality, the \$1.2 billion in welfare spending proposed by Pataki represents just 3.7 percent of the state budget. Medicaid, however, at nearly \$6 billion represents almost 19 percent of Pataki's budget.

Medicaid, which provides health coverage to workers with low incomes, the disabled, and the elderly, is the most costly of the means-tested benefits. An article in the *Financial Times* April 21 noted that many politicians have "shown little willingness to tackle the more costly parts of the welfare system such as Medicaid."

"As for the runaway costs of social security pensions and Medicare, the twin pillars of the middle class welfare state, reform of these is not even on the agenda," the article complained.

Meanwhile, in a harbinger of the future, protesters almost drowned out Giuliani's voice as they chanted outside city hall during his news conference. Windows in the room were shut to keep out the roar of the demonstrators.

Communist League in Sweden discusses Cuban revolution, defense of social wage

BY CATHARINA TIRSEN

STOCKHOLM — "When Fidel Castro spoke in Copenhagen March 11, he addressed the 4,500 people at the public meeting as co-fighters in the struggle for a better world," said a delegate to the third congress of the Communist League in Sweden. During his visit for the United Nations World Summit for Social Development, youth and workers gave the Cuban president confirmation of the opportunities for revolutionary socialists to meet and work with young people who want to struggle and build the communist movement in Sweden and around the world today. The resolve to make use of these openings was the focus of the Communist League congress held here April 1-2.

The night before the congress opened, delegates and guests attended a public forum on "Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution" by Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States and author of an article by the same title in *New Internationalist*.

"When you look at what's happening in Cuba, you have to start with the world. You have to start with the world economic crisis of capitalism, with the depression conditions and deflationary pressures that force the bosses to intensify their attacks on wages and working conditions, and with the resistance to these attacks, whether it is in Canada, Mexico, Germany, or Cuba," Waters said.

The acute crisis in Cuba — what's become known as the "special period" — was precipitated when aid and trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe collapsed, something Cuba was unprepared for. But even without that, Cuba would still be facing today the kind of economic crisis that confronts other Third World countries, Waters went on to explain.

What makes Cuba different from Mexico is the fact that workers and farmers made a socialist revolution 35 years ago. The government defends their interests not those of a bourgeoisie. Working people bring their weight to bear in dealing with the economic situation and finding a way forward.

"How can we defend the Cuban revolution here today?" asked one of the more than 30 participants at the forum.

"We have to get into the concrete activities going on, like building the August 1-7 'Cuba Lives' international youth festival in Cuba. We have to discuss and write about what is happening in Cuba," said Waters, in order to understand it and use Cuba's example. "But is that all? The Cuban revolution rises or falls with the class struggle in the rest of the world. It depends on forging communist leaderships in other parts of the world, capable of leading working-class movements to power." The Cuban revolution is a living example that this is possible, Waters said.

The discussion on the forum and the article by Waters, just published in Swedish in *Ny Internationalist* no. 2, continued at the



February demonstration of 1,000 students protesting budget cuts in Stockholm. The sign says: "We want to be able to study for more education. We are the future!"

congress the next day. Attending the meeting were delegates from the Communist League in Sweden, fraternal delegations from the Young Socialists in Sweden and communist leagues in several countries, and other guests.

"I have three co-workers who have read the article in *Ny Internationalist*," reported Anita Östling, a member of the Transport Workers Union. "They appreciated how the article looks at Cuba through the working class and takes workers seriously. Some workers also read Fidel's speech at the UN summit and remarked on how he talks about the unemployment even in the imperialist countries and says that something must be wrong in the entire system."

Sassa Norman, from the Young Socialists in Sweden, said, "I was as surprised as Fidel to see all the people at the public meeting in Copenhagen. I talked to many youth afterward and they had really been inspired by his speech. Not many young people in Scandinavia know what kind of a leader Fidel Castro is. But a lot of young people have opinions about Cuba and want to discuss Cuba."

Instability of capitalism

"The last months, weeks, and days illustrate the financial instability of a capitalism in deep crisis," said Communist League leader Carl-Erik Isacson, reporting on the article "Imperialism's march toward fascism and war," also published in *Ny Internationalist* no. 2. "As the crisis in Mexico has pulled down the dollar and driven up the Deutsch-mark and the yen, the Swedish krona has also fallen, further than any other currency in western Europe except the Italian lira. The losses that caused the failure of Baring's bank in London and the even bigger losses that dragged down Credit Lyonnais in France

are small compared to what the Swedish banks lost in 1990-91, when the Swedish government had to pour \$10 billion into the banking system to prevent a total collapse. And in 1992 an interest rate of 500 percent could not stop a free fall for the krona, which in a couple of days lost 25 percent of its value."

"The cherished 'Swedish model' is now the root of all evil for the rulers, a symbol of all the problems they must deal with to regain some strength," Isacson said. "Economics professors from Harvard and the University of Chicago who recently published a book on the Swedish model advised the rulers here to get rid of the high social wage and push for greater wage disparities."

The changes for working people in Sweden over the last few years have been dramatic. Total unemployment has gone from 3 percent to 14 percent, going down only slightly with the recent hiring. Hourly wages are low, comparable to those in Portugal. Anti-immigrant attacks by the government have fueled right-wing racist violence.

But the rulers in Sweden have achieved only a little of what they need to do in driving down workers' standard of living and expectations.

"The hourly wages are low, but the social wage is still high," Isacson explained. "You can still live on your pension in Sweden. A few years ago unemployment benefits and sick-leave pay were still 100 percent. Now it's down to 80 percent, and the government is campaigning to bring it down to 75 percent. Wage differences are still small."

"All this reflects the gains won by the working class in years of struggle," Isacson said. "The extent to which working people look upon sick pay, pensions, leaves, and unemployment benefits as rights and entitlements is a real problem for the rulers. These conquests strengthen the solidarity of the class at a time when the rulers are under enormous pressures to deal real blows to the social wage."

Because of the sentiment in the working class, the rulers cannot push through a frontal assault on the social wage as they would like. Instead, Isacson explained, they wage political campaigns to undermine the solidarity that exists among working people who consider it their right, and the right of everyone in the country, to have the security to raise children, even as a single mother; to live on your pension; to have full compensation when you are sick or unemployed; or to live through any hardship anybody may enter into as a result of the deepening crises.

Pointing to the attacks that have been carried out, Birgitta Isacson, a metal worker in Södertälje, said, "Now you have to think twice before going to the doctor or to the dentist. But it is important to remember how few of the government's schemes have actually been pushed

through. Remember the campaign against welfare recipients who supposedly spent their time on the beaches of Spain, Thailand, or the Canary Islands? All they could produce, with all their new authorities to check on people, was one example!"

The bosses in Sweden have been able to speed up work at the factories to some extent. One example is that the average time to build a Saab car went down from 70 hours in 1988 to 30 hours now. The teamwork concept, which began in Sweden, has been one instrument used by the capitalists to achieve that.

Isacson pointed out that although the number of strikes is still low, resistance is beginning. Miners in the north, for instance, recently held a sit-down strike against scheduled weekend work. The same issue sparked resistance at the Scania truck-building plant in Södertälje. And in breweries and meatpacking plants in Stockholm workers have resisted attempts to take away breaks.

"At the meatpacking plant where I work, it was impossible to organize a protest against the layoffs that are taking place now," reported Maria Hamberg, a member of the Food Workers Union. "But when the company tried to force all workers with 'foreign' family names to present their passports to the company, many refused and were actively supported by all other workers. The company had to back down after the union reported it to the state-appointed Discrimination Ombudsman, and even had to offer a public apology. Workers considered this a victory."

Fraternal delegates from the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Iceland, and Canada compared what the capitalist rulers in Sweden have and have not yet achieved with the employers' offensive against the working class in the countries where they live.

A living, fighting revolution

"A central task for the Communist League is to organize a political campaign in defense of the Cuban revolution — a socialist revolution, not a schema, not a utopia, but a living, fighting revolution that is attractive to workers and youth looking for answers in today's world," said Tirsén. Her report projected members of the Communist League working with other Cuba activists, co-workers, and young people to build a large delegation to the August international youth festival in Cuba and carry out other activities in defense of the revolution.

The socialist workers also projected participating in other struggles, from strikes and other labor resistance to protests against proposed cuts in social benefits.

"Together with the Young Socialists we want to build and strengthen a revolutionary youth organization," said Tirsén.

The Young Socialists in Sweden held a meeting in connection to the congress, where Young Socialists from United States, the United Kingdom, and Iceland also participated. The Young Socialists in Sweden decided to start a class series; to join with the Communist League in the international campaign to sell the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, and *New Internationalist*; and to help build the youth festival in Havana. "We want to work together with the Communist League. We think your experience and ours together will be a really powerful thing," Sassa Norman reported back to the congress.

Two days after the Communist League congress, the social democratic government in Sweden, together with one of the opposition parties, presented a new set of measures that proposed lowering unemployment and sick leave pay to 75 percent and imposing a ceiling on spending by local governments for hospitals, day-care centers, and other social services.

Congress delegates returned to work better prepared for the discussions among co-workers on how to cope with increasing demands of overtime, speedup, and the new trial balloons from the government as well as world politics and the importance of the example of the revolution in Cuba.

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Cuban youth addresses Miami meeting

Continued from front page

the Study of Youth in Havana, is international relations director of the Federation of University Students in Cuba and a member of the Union of Young Communists.

She spoke on "Cuba and Youth Today," at the meeting of 200 people, which was co-sponsored by a broad range of student groups including Amigas Latinas, Raíces Latinas, the National Organization for Women, the Comparative Sociology Graduate Students Association, and the Young Socialists Club. Five professors also endorsed the meeting in the interest of free speech.

Astrid González-Bello, secretary of the Student Organizations Council, chaired the meeting. González-Bello gave special thanks to the American Civil Liberties Union, which helped force the university administration to allow the event, and the FIU Faculty Senate, which passed a resolution calling on the university not to restrict free speech.

"Ms. Serrano's presence here reinforces the university's laudable tradition of upholding freedom of speech and assembly," political science professor Cheryl Rubenberg said. "I expect this audience to behave with tolerance and respect."

Bernard Johnson, outgoing president of the Black Student Union, also welcomed Serrano. "I am for free-speech," he said. "And that is why I am here tonight."

While the big majority of students in the audience—including many Cuban-Americans—wanted to hear Serrano's presentation and have a serious discussion about the Cuban revolution, about 70 right-wingers from Miami's Cuban-American community, joined by some students, came intending to prevent it.

'A free and sovereign Cuba'

"In 1959 Cuba became free and sovereign for the first time in its history," Serrano stated. *El Nuevo Herald*, the Spanish-language edition of the *Miami Herald*, used this opening statement as a display quote in an article the next day to highlight one of the main points the Cuban youth leader made in her presentation.

Immediately, the right-wing hecklers started shouting and tried to drown Serrano out. "Cuba sí, Castro no!" they shouted. Many students shouted back, "Let her speak." When the disrupters quieted down, Serrano continued.

"In 1989 Cuba entered a new stage," Serrano explained. "With the fall of the Soviet Union, we lost 85 percent of our foreign trade. We began a new era of development where we had to find Cuban solutions to Cuban problems. We have had to insert ourselves into the unjust world economy."

Through the course of her talk, a tug of war continued between the rightists who yelled and jeered and many in the audience who tried to quiet them. At one point the rightists sang the Cuban national anthem. Serrano sang along with them.

Frank Peña, president of the College Republicans, asked the first question. "Can I go to Cuba and speak at a meeting like you have been able to do here?" Peña asked. "And speak about the Republican Party?" Peña was one of the organizers of the demonstration against the meeting.

"Yes, of course," Serrano said. "Anyone can come." She explained that it is the U.S. government that has blocked travel to Cuba. Serrano gave Peña her card. "I invite you to come to Cuba and to the University of Havana," she said.

University police escorted Dade County Commissioner Pedro Reboledo to the front of the room and insisted that the chairpersons give him the microphone.

Reboledo asked Serrano if she would condemn the sinking of a tugboat July 13, 1994, and state that Castro is responsible. The tugboat, hijacked by Cubans seeking to come to the United States sank off the coast of Cuba. Forty-one people died. Many more were rescued by Cuban ships. The U.S. press has charged that the Cuban government deliberately sank the boat.

Serrano explained that the sequence of events leading to the sinking of the boat are "well-known by the people of Cuba. It has been reported in detail in the press and an investigation of the incident is being



Kenia Serrano, at podium, addresses audience at Florida International University in Miami, April 20. Attempts by right-wingers to disrupt the meeting failed. Militant/Janet Roth

carried out."

The chair recognized Vaughn Nelson, a 21-year-old Black student. He was standing in the middle of a group of right-wingers who had crowded an aisle and were among the most vociferous hecklers. University police, who did little to get the hecklers to take their seats, tried to pull Nelson away from the microphone.

But Nelson finally managed to speak. "I am disturbed by what is going on here," he said. "There is no dialogue here. I invite you to have a dialogue." Nelson said, "My grandparents on one side are from Jamaica. My other grandparents are Cuban. I have the intelligence to listen and decide for myself without these interruptions."

One questioner told Serrano, "I hope that when you go back to Cuba you tell people about American democracy and how the police were here to defend your right to speak." While the rightists applauded this comment, many students laughed.

"In Cuba," Serrano responded, "We don't need police at our meetings because we have a civil discussion."

During the course of the meeting, Serrano was able to describe what she learned during her tour of the United States, including her visit to picket lines of the Caterpillar strikers. "The strikers told me that although they have the right to strike," Serrano noted, "the company has fired many workers."

Debate at FIU

Despite repeated heckling, Serrano was able to answer questions for more than an hour. "The meeting ended without any incident," said the broadcaster on Spanish-language television Channel 23, in concluding the station's coverage of the event for the evening news.

Opinions about the meeting were hotly debated on the FIU campus the next day. Many showed respect for Serrano.

One Caribbean student remarked, "Those right-wingers could have brought a tank in there and Kenia would have stayed calm. She's amazing."

From the start the university administration tried to block the event. One administrator initially told student organizers the meeting could not take place. Later officials said that students would have to provide a written guarantee that \$3,000 would be available for security.

The American Civil Liberties Union joined the fight against the administration's undemocratic move. Many professors, on their own, sent E-mail messages to university president Modesto Maidique protesting the policy. Meeting organizers learned later in the week that the Faculty Senate had passed a unanimous resolution calling on the university to rescind the policy of requiring the security fee.

The university agreed to meet and negotiate with the student groups sponsoring the event after the ACLU threatened to go

to court and ask for an emergency injunction against the administration's actions. The student groups and the university reached a compromise. The students would pay \$400 under protest and the university would allow the meeting to go on.

The day before the meeting the student newspaper, *The Beacon*, published an editorial titled "Beyond Khalid: Welcome Kenia."

The editorial referred to an FIU meeting in late March where former Nation of Islam leader Khalid Muhammad spoke.

"Kudos to [Kenia Serrano] Puig for her courage in coming to FIU and for those who may not agree with what she is saying, but who adhere to her right to say it. FIU survived the racially divisive smoke and mirrors display by Khalid Muhammad without incident. Certainly, we can withstand Puig's communist viewpoint."

FIU tries to sabotage meeting

While the meeting was open to the public, FIU required those attending to obtain free tickets or get on a waiting list to attend. Right-wing protesters, in their big majority non-students, had no problem getting tickets, which were issued the day before the event. Dozens marched in a group to the meeting room and were allowed in. Cops denied at least 50 people, many of them students with tickets, entry into the room, even though there were still empty seats.

While the police prevented protesters from rushing the stage their actions encouraged the heckling. Many students complained after the meeting that the cops were seen joking with the hecklers.

At one point, the police attempted to take control of the audience microphone and require the event organizers to call only on the most vocal group of rightists. The organizers refused.

The fight for free speech and against the university's \$3,000 fee, and the meeting itself received widespread publicity. Virtually every television station in the city covered the meeting. Major articles appeared in the *Miami Herald* and *El Nuevo Herald*. *El Diario Las Américas* published an article entitled "Castroite fans the flames at FIU."

Divisions among the right-wing

The right-wing came out of the meeting discredited in the eyes of many FIU students and others. The conduct of the hecklers has also widened divisions among opponents of the Cuban revolution.

In a letter to the editor published in the *Miami Herald* April 24, Antonio Gonzalez writes, "I am thoroughly confused at how a precious opportunity was squandered to challenge peaceably one of Fidel Castro's propaganda ministers with facts and figures. Is there any way that a logical, rational, university-educated mind can foster repression and mayhem in the name of liberty and yet keep a straight face?"

Sebastián Acros, spokesperson of the Cuban Committee for Human Rights, made a similar point in an interview with *Exito*, a Spanish-language weekly that published an extensive article on Serrano's visit to Miami.

"It really bothers me," he said, "that the Cubans who have been here so long have not learned, first of all, that what the people associated with the dictatorship are seeking is to make us look bad; and secondly, to sit down, shut up, and ask an intelligent question."

In the rest of her four-day tour of Miami, Serrano was able to speak to airline workers, Haitian refugees, activists in the fight for immigrant rights, and Cuban-Americans who oppose the U.S. embargo of Cuba.

Seventy members of the Haitian rights group Veye-Yo greeted Serrano warmly April 21. The meeting was conducted in Spanish and Creole. Serrano was introduced by Veye-Yo leader Lavarice Gaudin. He said that Haitian activists should be proud of Serrano for her firmness at the FIU meeting.

Following a brief presentation, Haitian activists lined up at the microphone to ask questions. Afterwards, Haitian activists competed with each other for the chance to be photographed with Serrano.

At an April 22 citywide meeting sponsored by the Miami Coalition Against the U.S. Embargo of Cuba, the discussion continued. Students from FIU and the University of Miami, Haitian refugees, and others were among the 70 in attendance.

Elizardo Bascoy, a leader of the coalition and the Antonio Maceo Brigade, spoke about the fight to hold the FIU meeting. "In spite of all the pressure applied and all the rudeness of the right wing, Kenia demonstrated a great firmness," Bascoy said.

Serrano also spoke with United Airlines workers in the company lunch room, and spoke to a meeting of the Alliance of Workers in the Cuban Community.

Cuban youth to tour Australia, New Zealand

BY JANET ROTH

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Plans are underway for a speaking tour of Australia and New Zealand by Cuban youth leader Alejandro Herrera in May and June.

Herrera has received invitations to speak at university lectures in Sydney, Australia, as well as Auckland and Christchurch, New Zealand. Invitations have also been extended for the Cuban youth leader to speak at public meetings at a number of campuses in those cities. Students and faculty in the New Zealand cities of Hamilton and Palmerston North have also invited Herrera to speak at their schools. Maori rights activists involved in New Zealand land occupations have expressed interest in meeting with him to exchange experiences.

In addition, the New South Wales President of the National Union of Students, Jamie Parker, issued an invitation on behalf of his organization.

Herrera is a member of the provincial bureau of the Union of Young Communists in Havana. He has worked as a computer engineer at the Antillana de Acero steelworks, and prior to that was a member of Cuba's national swimming team, participating in national and international competitions. He has twice been a volunteer helping to harvest Cuba's sugarcane.

The tour is being coordinated by the Cuban Youth Tour committee in Sydney and the Cuba Friendship Society in Auckland. Itineraries are in the process of being drawn up and further invitations are welcome. Organizers will be fund-raising to meet both the international airfares and internal travel costs associated with the tour.

For further information on the tour contact: Cuba Youth Tour, c/- 3/157 Norton St., Ashfield, NSW, Australia 2131. Phone (02) 798-8740, or Cuba Friendship Society, P. O. Box 6716, Auckland, New Zealand 1036. Phone (09) 524-4716.

Lenin's fight for self-determination of oppressed nations

BY SARA LOBMAN

Reprinted below are several excerpts from *Lenin's Final Fight: Speeches and Writings, 1922-23*, a new title published by Pathfinder Press.

In the final months of his life, Russian revolutionary leader V.I. Lenin waged a political fight to maintain the communist course that had led the workers and peasants to power over the landlords and capitalists. A central part of that course was defending the rights of the historically oppressed nationalities in the old tsarist "prisonhouse of nations."

The right to self-determination was asserted by one of the first decrees of the newly established Soviet government in November 1917 and codified by the third Soviet congress in January of the follow-



V.I. Lenin, August 1922

ing year. That congress passed a resolution "leaving it to the workers and peasants of each nation to decide independently at their own authoritative congress of soviets whether they wish to participate in the federal government and in the other federal Soviet institutions, and on what terms."

In September 1922, Joseph Stalin drafted a resolution on relations between the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic (RSFSR) and the various independent republics. Lenin sharply criticized the draft document, which called for the "formal entry" of the Ukraine, Belorussia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, into the Russian Soviet Federation.

"We consider ourselves, the Ukrainian SSR, and others equal and enter with them on an equal basis into a new union, a new federation, the Union of Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia," Lenin explained.

The final resolution, also drafted by Stalin and approved by the Communist party's Central Committee, incorporated many of Lenin's proposals. It also called for three of the republics—Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan—to be admitted to

the new union not as full members, but as components of the Transcaucasian Federation.

When Georgian Communist leaders argued that the republic should be admitted as an independent entity, Grigory Ordzhonikidze, the Central Committee's representative in Georgia reacted by disciplining the Georgian leaders, ordering a number of them to leave Georgia and place themselves at the disposal of the Central Committee of the party in Russia.

At the end of October, nine of the 11 members of the Georgian Central Committee resigned in protest. Ordzhonikidze quickly replaced them with his supporters, who agreed to the proposed terms for the new federation. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was formed on Dec. 30, 1922.

The following month, at a private party in his apartment in Tiflis, Georgia, Ordzhonikidze flew into a rage and struck one of the dissenting Georgian Communists. This fact came to light during the investigation by a Political Bureau-appointed commission of inquiry proposed by Stalin and headed by Felix Dzerzhinsky. The commission's report, which Dzerzhinsky summarized to Lenin on December 12, sustained Ordzhonikidze.

Lenin, however, was not satisfied with the commission report and charged his secretaries with thoroughly reviewing it. Their report, which challenged many of the conclusions of the Dzerzhinsky commission, was suppressed by the bureaucratic regime in the Soviet Union headed by Joseph Stalin and his political heirs. It is printed for the first time in *Lenin's Final Fight*.

The excerpts reprinted below were dictated by Lenin to his secretaries in December 1922 as part of his "Letter to the Party Congress," directed to the 12th congress of the Russian Communist Party, which was scheduled for March 1923.

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BY V.I. LENIN

In my writings on the national question I have already said that an abstract presentation of the question of nationalism in general is of no use at all. A distinction must necessarily be made between the nationalism of an oppressor nation and that of an oppressed nation, the nationalism of a big nation and that of a small nation.

In respect of the second kind of nationalism we, nationals of a big nation, have nearly always been guilty, in historic practice, of an infinite number of cases of violence; furthermore, we commit violence and insult an infinite number of times without noticing it. It is sufficient to recall my Volga reminiscences of how non-Russians are treated; how the Poles are not called by any other name than Polachishka, how the Tatar is nicknamed Prince, how the Ukrainians are always



Demonstration of Baku Women's Union, 1920. Lenin insisted workers in Azerbaijan, Georgia, other oppressed nations must be free to determine their own future.

Khokhols and the Georgians and other Caucasian nationals always Kapkasians.

That is why internationalism on the part of oppressors or "great" nations, as they are called (though they are great only in their violence, only great as bullies), must consist not only in the observance of the formal equality of nations but even in an inequality, through which the oppressor nation, the great nation, would compensate for the inequality which obtains in real life. Anybody who does not understand this has not grasped the real proletarian attitude to the national question; he is still essentially petty bourgeois in his point of view and is, therefore, sure to descend to the bourgeois point of view.

What is important for the proletariat? For the proletariat it is not only important, it is absolutely essential that he should be assured that the non-Russians place the greatest possible trust in the proletarian class struggle. What is needed to ensure this? Not merely formal equality. In one way or another, by one's attitude or by concessions, it is necessary to compensate the non-Russians for the lack of trust, for the suspicion and the insults to which the government of the "dominant" nation subjected them in the past.

I think it is unnecessary to explain this to Bolsheviks, to Communists, in greater detail. And I think that in the present instance, as far as the Georgian nation is concerned, we have a typical case in which a genuinely proletarian attitude makes profound caution, thoughtfulness, and a readiness to compromise a matter of necessity for us. The Georgian who is disdainful of this aspect of the question, or who carelessly flings about accusations of "nationalist socialism" (whereas he himself is a real and true "nationalist socialist" and even a vulgar Great Russian bully), violates, in substance, the interests of proletarian class solidarity, for nothing holds up the development and strengthening of proletarian class solidarity so much as national injustice.

"Offended" nationals are not sensitive to anything so much as to the feeling of equality and the violation of this equality, if only through negligence or jest to the violation of that equality by their proletarian comrades. That is why in this case it is better to overdo rather than underdo the concessions and leniency towards the national minorities. That is why, in this case, the fundamental interest of proletarian solidarity and consequently of the proletarian class struggle requires that we never adopt a formal attitude to the national question, but always take into account the specific attitude of the proletariat of the oppressed (or small) nation towards the oppressor (or great) nation.

December 31, 1922

What practical measures must be taken in the present situation?

First, we must maintain and strengthen the union of socialist republics. Of this there can be no doubt. This measure is necessary for us and it is necessary for the world communist proletariat in its struggle against the world bourgeoisie and its defense against bourgeois intrigues.

Second, the union of socialist republics must be retained for its diplomatic apparatus. By the way, this apparatus is an exceptional component of our state apparatus. We have not allowed a single influential person from the old tsarist apparatus into it. All sections with any authority are composed of Communists. That is why it

has already won for itself (this may be said boldly) the name of a reliable communist apparatus purged to an incomparably greater extent of the old tsarist, bourgeois, and petty-bourgeois elements than that which we have had to make do with in other people's commissariats.

Third, exemplary punishment must be inflicted on Comrade Ordzhonikidze (I say this all the more regretfully as I am one of his personal friends and have worked with him abroad), and the investigation of all the material which Dzerzhinsky's commission has collected must be supplemented or started over again to correct the enormous mass of wrongs and biased judgments which it doubtlessly contains. The political responsibility for all this truly Great Russian nationalist campaign must, of course, be laid on Stalin and Dzerzhinsky.

Fourth, the strictest rules must be introduced on the use of the national language in the non-Russian republics of our union, and these rules must be checked with special care. There is no doubt that our apparatus being what it is, there is bound to be, on the pretext of unity in the railway service, unity in the fiscal service and so on, a mass of truly Russian abuses. Special ingenuity is necessary for the struggle against these abuses, not to mention special sincerity on the part of those who undertake this struggle. A detailed code will be required and only the nationals living in the republic in question can draw it up at all successfully.

Moreover we must not in any way reject in advance that as a result of all this work we may well take a step backward at our next Congress of Soviets, namely, retaining the union of Soviet socialist republics only for military and diplomatic affairs and in all other respects restoring full independence to the individual people's commissariats.

It must be borne in mind that the decentralization of the people's commissariats and the lack of coordination in their work as far as Moscow and other centers are concerned can be compensated sufficiently by party authority if it is exercised with sufficient prudence and impartiality. The harm that can result to our state from a lack of unification between the national apparatuses and the Russian apparatus is infinitely less than that which will be done not only to us but to the whole International and to the hundreds of millions of the peoples of Asia, which are destined to follow us onto the stage of history in the near future.

It would be unpardonable opportunism if, on the eve of the debut of the East, just as it is awakening, we undermined our prestige with its peoples, even if only by the slightest crudity or injustice towards our own non-Russian nationalities. The need to rally against the imperialists of the West, who are defending the capitalist world, is one thing. There can be no doubt about that and it would be superfluous for me to speak about my unconditional approval of it.

It is another thing when we ourselves lapse, even if only in trifles, into imperialist attitudes towards oppressed nationalities, thus undermining all our principled sincerity, all our principled defense of the struggle against imperialism. But the morrow of world history will be a day when the awakening peoples oppressed by imperialism are finally aroused and the decisive long and hard struggle for their liberation begins.

December 31, 1922

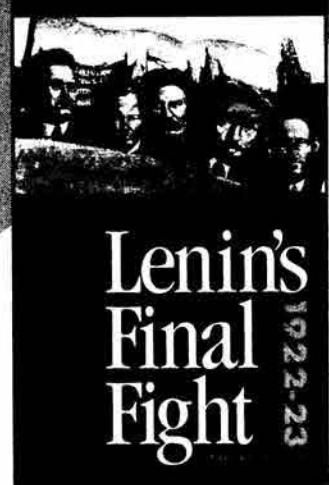
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Communist candidate campaigns for jobs, support for Irish fight

BY TIM RIGBY

MANCHESTER, England — "In the worsening social and economic conditions we face today, working people here and across the world need to understand who we are, who our friends are, and who our enemies are. Our enemies are not Spanish fishermen, the unemployed, immigrant workers, single mothers, or anyone else the capitalists want to blame for their crisis," said Chris Morris the Communist League candidate standing in the Central Ward for the May 4 Manchester city council elections. "Our enemy is the ruling rich and their government."

Morris, a worker at Philips Semiconductors in Stockport and a member of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU), was speaking at a meeting to launch his campaign at the local Pathfinder book shop here. He detailed the conditions working people face in Manchester. In a city of 405,000 people, 78,000 are unemployed, he informed the meeting. Eighty percent of jobs open to 16-year-olds in Manchester pay less than £2.00 (1£=US\$1.60) an hour, and one-third of those jobs are below £1.50 an hour. One-quarter of Manchester's homeless, most of whom live in Central Ward, are army veterans, he said.

"These facts," Morris said, "show something of what working people are go-

ing through. The positions the Communist League is advancing in this election are about beginning to combat this crisis, to forging unity between working people in Manchester, the United Kingdom, and across the world so that we can begin to face up to our enemies."

The average workweek in Britain today, stated Morris, is 43.9 hours, and 25 percent of male manual workers in any given week work more than 48 hours. "This, of course," Morris noted, "is while millions are unemployed." The demand for a 30-hour workweek with no loss in pay is about bridging the gap between those employed and those without work, he stated.

Morris focused on the demand for massive government-funded public works, and talked of the absurdity of unmended roads, substandard housing, and collapsing school buildings, while all the necessary materials and labor force are available.

The Communist League candidate also highlighted the demand for all British troops out of Ireland now. He stated that this was a central demand of his campaign to free Ireland from British occupation and overcome divisions created by the ruling rich between workers of Irish and of British origin.

This demand generated considerable discussions around a campaign table set



Militant/Naomi Craine

The Communist League candidate in Manchester is calling for British troops out of Ireland. Above, marchers in Derry, Northern Ireland, demand their withdrawal.

up in Levenshulme Ward the day before the election meeting by supporters of the Communist League candidates. Members of the Young Socialists in Manchester helped staff the table. Many workers from Ireland or of Irish origin live in Levenshulme, where Communist League candidate Debbie Delange is running.

Delange is a train cleaner at nearby Longsight passenger train depot and member of the National Union of Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers. Passersby voiced their support for the demand, and

others stopped to talk. One man driving by saw the campaign placard and parked his car just to get a hold of a campaign statement. Others bought the *Militant*.

Campaigners discussed the demand for cancellation of the Third World debt. Two young men began a discussion with Tony Hunt, the campaign director, asking why "we" in Britain try to solve a problem the people in the Third World had got themselves into? Hunt explained the unequal terms of trade through which major capitalist powers plunder underdeveloped countries, the role of the banks, and the need for working-class unity across the world; and the young men stopped to listen and discuss this.

On the Levenshulme campaign table, Frances Rogan, a member of the Young Socialists and a campaign chairperson, argued alongside others for the need to defend Cuba and Cuba's socialist revolution and cited the fighting spirit of workers in Cuba as an example to working people around the world. The Communist League will soon launch a campaign in Fallowfield Ward for Ann Fiander, an assembly worker and member of the AEEU.

Pathfinder sets plan to sell Lenin book

BY SARA LOBMAN

Pathfinder Press has announced a major effort to promote its newest title, *Lenin's Final Fight: Speeches and Writings, 1922-23*. More than 50 copies of *Lenin's Final Fight* were sold as part of a special pre-publication offer at an April 22 program in New York City on Cuba that took up how working people in that country are using their socialist revolution to fight the effects of the international crisis of capitalism.

Mary-Alice Waters was the featured speaker at the April 22 forum. Waters has edited several Pathfinder titles including, most recently, the *Bolivian Diary of Ernesto Che Guevara*. "It is important to all of us who need to learn our history as we prepare for fights today," Waters said, holding up a copy of *Lenin's Final Fight*. It will be read with great interest by those in Cuba who are grappling—in living practice — with many of the questions that confronted Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, she said.

Lenin's Final Fight follows the final political battle waged by V.I. Lenin to maintain the communist course that had led the workers and peasants of Russia to power five years earlier and given a giant impulse to workers' struggles the world over. Spanning from Lenin's report to the 11th congress of the Russian Communist Party in March 1922 until a stroke a year later effectively ended his political life, Pathfinder has included many of the letters, speeches, resolutions, and memos by the revolutionary leader.

It is the first time in any language that all these materials have been pulled together in chronological order, allowing the readers to follow for themselves this life-and-death fight. Everything that Lenin is known to have written from Dec. 21, 1922, until his last letter of March 6, 1923, is included; several items are published in English for the first time and one for the first time in any language.

A cloth edition of the book will be available in early May. Pathfinder is offering it at a special pre-publication discount of \$25, half off the cover price, for members of the Pathfinder Readers Club.

Pathfinder has sent out nearly 100 copies of the book to prominent review journals, as well as professors, authors, newsletters, and magazines that specialize in the history of the Russian revolution and Slavic studies. Many of these magazines have reviewed other Pathfinder titles, and professors and other prominent

individuals have prepared short comments that can be used in promoting the book in the coming weeks.

Pathfinder is also advertising with several book wholesalers, who sell to many chains and independent bookstores in the United States. These include Baker and Taylor's monthly catalog and a promotional piece being prepared by Inland for distribution at the American Booksellers

Association trade show and convention in June.

Doug Hord, a Pathfinder sales representative in Boston, has pulled together a list of people who specialize in acquiring books on Russian studies for libraries. "Right now we could send information via electronic mail to 50 or 60 of these individuals to whom *Lenin's Final Fight* would be of direct interest," Hord noted.

New issue of Cuban journal explores 'cultural explosion and challenges'

BY MIKE TABER

A new issue of *La Gaceta de Cuba* has recently come off the press. A literary journal published six times a year by the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNEAC), *La Gaceta* is a leading forum for discussion and debate on culture, politics, and challenges facing the Cuban revolution today. The first issue in 1995 of the Spanish-language publication includes a wide assortment of essays, interviews, short stories, poetry, and book reviews.

An article by Cuban minister of culture Armando Hart, written on the 100th anniversary of Cuba's war for independence, discusses Cuba's legacy.

"In the midst of its great difficulties," Hart writes, "Cuba is currently undergoing a gigantic cultural explosion. And cultural explosions, like political ones, present challenges and unforeseen events." Cuba can confront this challenge "because we are aware of the universal nature of these questions, and because, in their great majority, our people identify with the conquests of the revolution."

"In terms of political ideas," Hart says, "the Cuban revolution was the most important development in the Western world in the last 50 years."

Also in this issue is an interview conducted in 1967 by Desiderio Navarro, director of the magazine *Cristeros*, with the renowned French author Marguerite Duras. In the course of the interview, Duras contrasted Cuba's cultural openness with the policy of "socialist realism" in the Soviet Union. Navarro notes in his introductory comments that, for political reasons, the interview was not published in Cuba at the time, and appears now in *La Gaceta*, 27 years later, for the first time.


Miguel Barnet, winner of Cuba's 1994 award for literature, writes about a recent visit to Nigeria and Benin. Barnet, best known for *Biografía de un Cimarrón*, his 1966 novel recounting the life of an escaped slave, visited Africa as part of a UNESCO delegation retracing the slave route. Over the course of the slave trade, Barnet notes, more than 2 million men, women, and children were uprooted from Africa to toil on the plantations of Cuba's conquerors. His essay on this forced migration traces its impact on Cuban culture down to today.

Rounding out the issue, Humberto Arenal writes on American movies, Emilio García Montiel reviews the works of Japanese Nobel Prize winner Kenzaburo Oe, Jorge Luis Arcos discusses the common cultural heritage shared with Cubans abroad, and Miguel Mejides presents his short story "Rumba Palace."

Subscriptions to *La Gaceta de Cuba* can be purchased from Pathfinder. Single copies of the 64-page, large-format journal will also be available for \$10 from some of the Pathfinder bookstores listed on page 12.

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Aftermath of the Oklahoma Bombing: Democratic Rights Under Attack. Speaker: Maceo Dixon, Socialist Workers Party candidate for Boston City Council. Sat., May 6, 7:30 p.m. 780 Tremont St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (617) 247-6772.

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The CIA in Guatemala. Sat., May 6, 7:30 p.m. 2490 University Ave. (East side of Hwy 280, on 16A bus line.) Donation: \$4. Tel: (612) 644-6325.

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The Aftermath of the Oklahoma City Bombing: Why Working People Should Oppose Government Attacks on Democratic Rights. Fri., May 5, 7 p.m. 141 Halsey. Donation: \$4. Tel: (201) 643-3341.

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on Capitol Hill. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

AUSTRALIA

Sydney

Superexploitation of Immigrant Labor — From the Philippines to Australia. Panel of speakers including Hung Nguyen, co-author of "The Hidden Cost of Fashion," a report by the clothing union on homework and child labor. Sat., May 6, 6 p.m. 66 Albion St., Surry Hills. Donation: \$4. Tel: (02) 281 3297.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

From Turkey to Algeria — The Crisis of Capitalist Regimes in the Middle East. Speaker: James Robb, Communist League. Sat., May 6, 7 p.m. La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Road. Donation: \$3. Tel: (9) 379-3075.

White House calls for expanded FBI spying

Continued from front page

"fundamentalist Islamic terrorist groups." An April 20 *Wall Street Journal* item about terrorism used some variation of the term "Muslim extremists" no less than 13 times in a 15-paragraph article.

Thugs broke the windows of the Oklahoma City home of Suhair Al Mosawi, a 26-year-old Iraqi immigrant, on April 20. As a result of the shock, she miscarried her seven-month pregnancy.

Muslims were denied participation in the platform of speakers and clergy assembled for a memorial service led by President Bill Clinton and Billy Graham in Oklahoma City April 23.

"To speak of people with dark Middle East complexions as authors of the terror even as the FBI was issuing warrants for the arrests of white Americans is an act of terror, too," said Abdelbari Atwan, editor of *Al Quds*, an Arab daily in London.

"No one in the Arab community supports these atrocities," said a statement released by the Arab American Institute re-

garding the bombing. "But unlike most Americans, we have had to take time from grief and outrage to defend ourselves from media 'experts' who quickly implicated our community in this heinous act."

Even after "two white males" were identified as the main suspects, Weldon Kennedy, the FBI agent in charge of the Oklahoma City investigation, was still smearing "Muslim fundamentalists."

On April 25, Detroit-area Muslim leaders were joined by the president of the local NAACP chapter at a press conference protesting the anti-Islamic hysteria and Clinton's proposals to expand FBI powers.

"Do not let this tragedy rush us into an anti-terrorist law that would take away the civil liberties of minority groups of which Muslims are the most prominently targeted," said Imam Abdullah El-Amin, chairman of the Detroit Muslim Center.

Wendell Anthony, the city's NAACP president, said the so-called anti-terrorist laws would be applied selectively. "We

know that this will not be applied equitably or fairly. Can you imagine a group of Black men running around Detroit calling themselves the Detroit Militia, dressed in fatigues, carrying AK47s?" he asked. "They would be rounded up by the FBI, the CIA, the Secret Service, the Army, and the Marine Corps — yesterday."

On April 23, the White House announced it will seek expanded powers for the FBI and other police agencies to tap telephones and scour the personal records of those deemed "suspected terrorists." Credit, hotel, travel, and other records of such individuals would be subject to police snooping. And Clinton wants phone companies to assure easier access for police bugging of telephones.

The president tried to pretty-up his proposal by comparing these measures with the introduction of metal detectors at airports.

The FBI already maintains files on thousands of organizations and hundreds of thousands of individuals — at a minimum. The proposal to expand the powers of the secret police to meddle in the affairs of individuals and organizations deemed a threat by the U.S. government dovetails with the proposed Omnibus Counterterrorism Act. (See article on page 14.) Democratic and Republican members of Congress leapt to profess their support for the anti-democratic measures amid the Oklahoma bombing hysteria.

The Senate unanimously passed a resolution April 25 calling for the use of the death penalty against those convicted in the bombing. In an April 21 editorial, the *Wall Street Journal* said that the only thing most people want to know "is how

we can catch and try and kill them."

The *New York Times* editors, mindful of the exposures of FBI "Cointelpro" spying and harassment on antiwar, labor, Black, women's, socialist, and other organizations in the 1970s, cautioned against moving too quickly. The FBI, it stated, "has a weak history of curbing its own excesses."

Prominent opinion columnists such as the *Times*'s A.M. Rosenthal are singing a different tune. He warned his readers they would have "to change some of our convictions about the absolute primacy of our rights above our survival," in support of Clinton's proposal.

Federal agents are holding former Army sergeant Timothy McVeigh, a 26-year-old right-winger, as the main suspect in the blast; along with James Nichols, a farmer in Michigan, and Terry Nichols, his brother, who are being held on conspiracy charges.

McVeigh is said to have links with the Michigan Militia, a rightist paramilitary outfit, and other right-wing organizations. A fake driver's license he carried had the date of issue as April 19, 1993 — the same day the FBI and other federal cops burned the Branch Davidians compound in Waco, Texas, to the ground, incinerating more than 80 people. April 19 was also the date of the Oklahoma blast. Various rightist outfits claim affinity with the Branch Davidians, seeing the murderous police action in Waco as a government assault on the right to bear arms.

Rightist organizations such as the Militia — often heavily infiltrated by police agents — promote conspiracy theories, campaign against taxes and gun control, and are generally white supremacist.

Youth protest rightists in Canada

Continued from Page 16

the cops charged into the crowd and began beating up some of the participants. They arrested nine demonstrators and charged them with public mischief and police assault. Four of those arrested were kept in jail for several days without the right to make bail.

Seventy people protested these arrests by marching to the Parthenais jail April 23, where the activists were being held.

In the weeks leading up to the demonstration, a public debate broke out over how to protest HLI's presence in Montreal. The Quebec Teachers Union Federation (CEQ), League of Human Rights, and the Quebec Coalition for Free Abortion decided not to participate in the protest, arguing that a march in the streets against HLI could "endanger" Montreal's abortion clinics. Gisèle Bourret, a CEQ representative, said, "These people [HLI] are rather frightening. We don't want to have a confrontation with them."

Participants in the demonstration were not afraid, however. "Whether HLI comes to question our rights to free and legal abortion or not, it's important not to hide our heads in the sand," said Nadine Allard, a leader of the Coalition against Human Life International.

"I respect everyone's opinion. I think it is important to express one's view in the streets," said André, a member of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) who works at Bombardier-Canadair in Montreal. "But why are there so many cops?"

On April 21, the last day of the HLI conference, several hundred supporters of lesbian and gay rights protested outside the hotel Radisson where the 1,300 delegates were meeting. As the HLI members packed their bags to leave town, they grumbled about the reception they had received. "No other city in the world has ever mounted the kind of opposition HLI met in Montreal," said Paul Marx.

In the 1970s women in Quebec won the right to abortion through big battles in the streets. Today, the province has 19 abortion clinics, by far the biggest number in

any province of Canada.

Due to the public outrage against HLI, Archbishop Turcotte of the Notre-Dame Basilica, which hosted the HLI mass, was forced to publicly question HLI saying the more he found out about their ideas, the more "unhappy" he became. He said the Basilica will be discussing whether to let groups such as HLI use their facilities in the future.

Carole Caron is a member of IAM Lodge 712, in Montreal.

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Land of milk and mansions — A seven-bedroom, five-bathroom mansion is available in Lethbridge, Canada, for Can\$1.5 million. Early in the century, pictures of the landmark house were



Harry Ring

featured on posters used to lure immigrants to Canada. It was depicted as a typical prairie farmhouse.

Must have sophisticated taste buds — Campbell Soup Co. re-

called 62,000 Swanson's Kids Fun Feast Chompin' Chicken Drumlets because some contained pieces of hard plastic. What puzzles us is how did the kids know it wasn't just extra pieces of chicken?

Sexist pigs of the week — In Oslo, a panel of Norwegian judges acquitted a man who beat his girlfriend because, he said, she constantly berated him. The judges said, "The beatings must be seen in the light of [the woman] more or less making a lifestyle out of provoking and irritating the accused so that he lost control."

Free-market medicine — Homicide charges are pending against a Milwaukee-area medical lab in the case of two women who

died of cervical cancer after Pap smear tests clearly showing signs of cancer were reported as "normal."

The lab uses a piece-work system, and in these two cases, the technician was doing up to 40,000 smear checks a year, compared to a professionally recommended maximum of 12,000.

Even-handed justice — Charges of threatening two Montreal transit cops were dropped against Stéphane Renaud and the cops were charged with assault. Renaud was beaten by the cops after he crushed a pop can on the floor of a shopping center adjacent to the subway.

The charges were switched after a shopping center security video

of the beating was discovered. The outcome? The cops were acquitted.

Your tax \$\$\$ at work — If you're a taxpayer, you helped Seagram take over MCA, the entertainment biggie. To finance the purchase, Seagram sold back to DuPont \$8.3 billion worth of stock it owned in that company. This was \$760 million less than the market price. In return, DuPont handled the buyback as a "dividend" payment. Under a tax loophole, that saved Seagram about \$1.5 billion in federal taxes.

What price insanity? — Kaiser-Hill won a \$3.5 billion, five-year contract to supervise a dozen other companies in the ongoing effort to clean up the lethal atomic

waste at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant in Colorado. It will take decades more and a tab of \$22.5 billion to finish the cleanup. The feds estimate it will cost \$230 billion to get rid of the waste at other weapons facilities.

P.S. — Those radioactive waste cleanup estimates are based on temporary storage. After more than half a century of accumulation, they still don't have a clue as to where to finally put the stuff.

Thought for the week — "Health-care benefits are a major factor that trap people in poverty. They keep you from working your way up the economic ladder." — An Arizona legislator saluting the demise of a bill to expand low-income health care.

Financial control board to run D.C. government

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Stepping up the bipartisan attacks on the rights and living standards of working people in this city, U.S. president Bill Clinton signed a bill April 17 creating a powerful financial control board to oversee the D.C. government.

The board is empowered to run D.C. affairs into the next century. It is charged with ensuring that the city comes up with a balanced budget by 1999. Towards this end, the board will have the power to slash thousands of city jobs and cut hundreds of millions of dollars of spending on various social programs and services.

The five members of the control board, who will be appointed by Clinton within the next few weeks, can reject city budgets and impose their own spending plans. The board also has the power to overrule new labor agreements and other contracts, reject local legislation, and change almost any decision made by the mayor and city council.

While the board appointees — likely to be wealthy businessmen — will not be paid, they will have at their disposal a full-time staff headed by an executive director who is to receive about \$115,000 a year.

According to the *Washington Post*, the control board "would be the strongest such panel ever created to oversee a U.S. city." It would remain in existence at least until the city balanced four budgets in a row and repaid all money borrowed in doing so. It is modeled after a similar financial board imposed on New York City

some 20 years ago.

The board's power "is absolute and it is absolutely necessary," stated Republican representative James Walsh, chairman of the House subcommittee on the District of Columbia. "This authority needs to have control."

"I think the board started out as bad news but has become good news," stated D.C. mayor Marion Barry, who after some initial hesitation threw his wholehearted support behind this appointed body.

The law also directs the mayor to appoint a chief financial officer to handle the city's money on a day-to-day basis. This person, who must be approved by the board, will have more responsibility than the mayor, according to Barry.

Republican representative Thomas Davis from Virginia, the chief architect of the control board law, claimed the board would give Barry the "political shield" to make unpopular decisions about cuts. Davis said the existence of this board would help facilitate the freeing up of city tax money for a new downtown sports arena. "It is the one note of hope in this whole process," he stated.

The idea for such a financial control board was first publicly raised by Democrat Eleanor Holmes Norton, the district's nonvoting delegate to the House of Representatives. She praised the new law as maintaining the integrity of self-rule.

In an April 11 editorial entitled "Home Rule Isn't Dead," the *Washington Post* presented a similar point of view. "Nothing in the new law prevents either

the mayor or the council from seizing the fiscal initiative and exercising the financial self-discipline necessary for recovery," the *Post* wrote. "Home rule" has been limited all along....Nothing in that creation of an elected local government allowed the mayor or council control over the city's finances. Or anything else, for that matter."

In 1973, Congress granted the city what was called "home rule." It allowed district residents to elect a mayor and city council. Congress, however, retained ultimate power to overrule their decisions. For the previous 99 years, three appointed commissioners ran Washington.

The granting of a home rule charter was an attempt by the ruling powers to divert a growing protest movement — fueled by the civil rights struggle — demanding statehood for Washington, D.C., and for the right of this majority-Black city to have the right to vote for its representatives.

Brian Williams is a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 27 in Cheverly, Maryland.



D.C. mayor Marion Barry. Board gives mayor "political shield" to make unpopular cuts, says Rep. Thomas Davis.

— 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —

THE MILITANT

Published in the Interest of the Working People

May 8, 1970

Price 10¢

PORT-OF-SPAIN, Trinidad, April 29 — The brutal repression of the mass movement in Trinidad and Tobago by the Eric Williams government was reinforced today by the adoption of a sweeping new emergency law empowering the government to suspend indefinitely all the personal and political freedoms laid down by the Trinidadian constitution.

The law was adopted in the grip of a state of emergency and curfew declared by the government April 21 as a desperate response to two months of massive antigovernment and anti-imperialist demonstrations.

The mass demonstrations of the past two months represent the high point of the Trinidadian Black power movement which has been given impetus by the deterioration of the economy as well as by the rise of Black nationalism in the United States. The National Joint Action Committee (NJAC), a united front of several Black power organizations and trade unions, developed out of this movement and by the beginning of 1970, Black power actions under its leadership had become a regular occurrence.

When the government instituted the "emergency" on April 21, it faced a further challenge — a mutiny of sections of the Trinidad Army based at Teteron Bay. At this point, Prime Minister Eric Williams asked for arms and ammunition from the United States, while U.S. and British warships arrived off the coast of the island. President Nixon ordered a fleet of ships carrying 2,000 battle-ready Marines into the area.

THE MILITANT

PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

May 5, 1945

In a mighty demonstration of power the masses of northern Italy last week rose in insurrection and wiped out the remnants of the Fascist regime in its last stronghold. With Partisan fighters as the shock troops, the workers seized control of the great industrial cities in the Lombardy plain. Mussolini and his Fascist aides met the end deserved by all hated tyrants. After a summary trial they were put to death by a firing squad.

From here on events followed a familiar pattern. The Committee of National Liberation, consisting of Stalinists, "Socialists" and Liberals, received the power which the insurgent masses had wrenched from the hands of the Fascists and Nazis — and promptly handed it over to the bankrupt Bonomi government which rules in Rome by the grace of Allied bayonets. Allied troops immediately rushed in to "restore order" in the liberated cities.

Milan — "Red Milan" — center of the great revolutionary working-class actions which preceded Mussolini's rise to power — was the white-hot focus of last week's stirring mass uprising. The transport workers gave the signal by going on strike. A general strike of all workers in Milan was then set for May 1, the traditional socialist holiday of the international working class. Observing the precarious conditions of the German military establishment and the fear and confusion which had seized their fascist enemies, the Milan workers advanced the date of the general strike to April 25.

With transportation and industry paralyzed, the workers moved into action. Enemy barracks were stormed, strategic buildings and public places occupied by the armed people. Everywhere the Fascist scum were routed.

New Zealand Rail has 'complete and utter disregard for safety'

BY JOAN SHIELDS

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand — A group of 11 train drivers (engineers) compiled a 39-page report detailing growing dangers on the South Island's main trunk rail line.

The report states that the level of risk is swelling alarmingly as trains become longer and more frequent. "The traveling public have a blind faith that rail is safe. If only they knew," it says.

The drivers explain it is not uncommon for workers to fall asleep after exceeding the unenforced 11-hour operating limit. They also detail how the lack of track maintenance has caused derailments. Describing the stress drivers are under, the report says human error caused by unrealistic rostering meant safety codes were often breached. Drivers then covered up their actions rather than face dismissal.

New Zealand Rail was "pushing staff to extremes" in a "complete and utter disregard for safety," the report says.

A recent Militant Labor Forum here took up the question of health and safety in the workplace. Maevis Watson, health and safety consultant for the Meat Workers Union, pointed out that "the workplace plays a large part in our overall health."

Changes in technology and work organization have created a new generation of health issues, she told the meeting. "Workers are working harder, faster, and for longer, under intense pressure. Often

one person is doing two people's jobs," she said.

Legislation doesn't exist to protect workers from new industrial diseases caused by chemical poisoning, she noted. Watson described one factory where all 60 workers had been affected by the chemicals they worked with, and two workers suffered brain damage.

She also detailed the way changes to the accident compensation (ACC) legislation in 1992 acted against workers. Employers increasingly pressured workers not to declare or take time off for workplace injuries, she said. Seasonal and casual workers who were injured often found that ACC refused to compensate them.

In the last two years 86 people died on the job in New Zealand. In 1995, there have already been nine deaths in the construction industry alone. An adviser for the government department that administers the 1992 Health and Safety in Employment Act attributed these accidents to "changes in technology, building methods, and employee numbers."

The heaviest fine enacted against an employer for negligence leading to death was \$11,500. Under the 1992 act, 19 workers involved in accidents have also been prosecuted for not taking care of their own safety.

Joan Shields is a member of the Meat Workers Union in Christchurch.

Answer rulers' assault on rights

The United States government, with a helpful hand from many in the mass media, is using the bombing that killed more than 100 people at the Oklahoma City federal building to test the waters for squeezing democratic rights and expanding the use of the death penalty.

Washington is the chief purveyor of terror around the globe — be it the Clinton administration's incineration of scores of people at the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, two years ago, or the 1991 assault on Iraq, in which tens of thousands were slaughtered.

The ruling class in the United States, anticipating more working-class opposition to its headlong march toward war, economic devastation, and fascism, is girding up to use rougher methods against political opponents. A convenient scapegoat at the hands of Democratic and Republican politicians is people of Arab descent, those whose faith is Islam, and the governments of Iraq and Iran.

The bipartisan stampede to support the Omnibus Counterterrorism Act of 1995 and other such measures — which would deal blows to hard-won democratic rights — must not go unanswered.

Expanded secret police powers will be aimed at the working class primarily. The opening paragraph of the lead editorial in the April 26 *Los Angeles Times* reminds us of the real record of the FBI, CIA, and other such government agencies. "For 38 years, the FBI waged a campaign of infiltration and harassment against... the Socialist Workers Party," the editors wrote. "The bureau staged burglaries, planted fake news stories and otherwise sought to discredit the party and its members, who,

though pushing a radical political agenda, were engaging in peaceful and lawful political behavior.

"It is worth recalling this episode, along with the FBI's notorious Counterintelligence Program, or Cointelpro, which was used not to gather evidence of criminality but to suppress lawful dissent by anti-Vietnam War protesters and civil rights leaders in the 1960s and 1970s."

It is indeed an episode worth recalling, and defenders of democratic rights can read about the fight against government spying and harassment in two books published by Pathfinder Press: *FBI on Trial—The Victory in the Socialist Workers Party Suit Against Government Spying*, and *Cointelpro: The FBI's Secret War on Political Freedom*. These two books are valuable weapons for working-class fighters today.

The government's proposals to expand powers for spies and snoops, legalize broader authority to deport "undesirables," and pry into and disrupt the lives of organizations and individuals are trial balloons. The labor movement has a big stake in organizing to protest these anti-democratic measures.

Since those accused in the Oklahoma bombing are home-grown right-wingers, capitalist politicians insist the political police need new powers to stem the threat from the right. But anti-democratic measures are always used a hundred times more against the organizations of the working class when it goes into struggle.

Trade unions, student organizations, and others should demand: Stop the anti-Arab, anti-Islamic crusade! Hands off democratic rights!

Washington's nuclear hypocrisy

Whatever the exact outcome of negotiations on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), working people can be sure they will not make the world any safer from the prospect of nuclear war.

Washington is blatantly using the talks to codify the right to maintain its deadly nuclear arsenal. That's what it means to indefinitely extend the treaty without even a promise that the nuclear weapons states will dismantle their arms. And Secretary of State Warren Christopher's "assurance" to non-nuclear states has loopholes big enough to drive a tank through.

The U.S. government is not only responsible for the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the only time nuclear arms were ever used against human beings. It has also contemplated using them in almost every major military conflict since — against the people of Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, and undoubtedly other countries that have not come to light. It was in response to Washington's attempts to turn its military machine against the workers and farmers of the Soviet Union and China following World War II that the regimes in those countries decided they too must have the atomic bomb, in the interest of self-preservation.

While maintaining as inalienable its own right to build more atomic bombs, Washington hypocritically uses agreements like the NPT to wage campaigns against governments that do not bow to its wishes, such as those in North Korea, Iraq, or Iran.

The fact is that Washington and the other states holding nuclear weapons — from London and Paris to Tel

Aviv and New Delhi — have no intention of giving them up. As the fight for markets sharpens among the various capitalist powers and tensions increase, the likelihood of military conflicts breaking out in which nuclear weapons could be used grows. All the treaties and assurances in the world will not stop this manifestation of capitalism in decay.

Working people should welcome the fight by the governments of South Africa and Cuba to rid the world of nuclear weapons. South African foreign minister Alfred Nzo spoke for toilers around the globe when he called for steps to "accelerate the pace of nuclear disarmament" by all governments that have the arms. Cuba's foreign minister, Roberto Robaina, did the same when he noted that disarmament must be carried out in the countries where there are nuclear weapons, "as the only way to guarantee long-lasting peace and safety to everyone."

The positions of these governments are a result of revolutionary struggles. It was under the pressure of the rising democratic revolution in South Africa, with millions mobilized to bring down the apartheid system, that the now-defunct white regime in Pretoria became the only government to ever dismantle its nuclear weapons.

In Cuba, workers and farmers made a socialist revolution, took power into their own hands, and began using it to defend the interests of working people. The working class internationally needs to follow this lead in taking power away from the warmakers, not just to end capitalist exploitation but also to end for all time the threat of nuclear war.

Vietnam's defeat of imperialism

Twenty years ago the Vietnamese succeeded in expelling the last contingent of imperialist armed forces from their country. They scored a victory for all humanity by finally wresting control of their own country after continual colonial and imperialist domination by the governments of Japan, then France, then the United States. Oppressed people the world over cheered as helicopters plucked the final remaining U.S. personnel from the roof of the U.S. embassy in Saigon in April 1975. This was a victory, too, for the millions throughout the world who mobilized in opposition to the war waged by Washington.

The war took the lives of more than 3 million Vietnamese and 60,000 U.S. soldiers. Washington engaged more than 8 million U.S. military personnel in the effort to dominate Indochina during the course of the war. The tonnage of bombs dropped over Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam was greater than had been dropped anywhere in the world in all previous wars combined. The U.S. government made the Vietnamese pay a high price for their determination to control their own country. But Washington's mighty military machine, pounding a small country year after year, could not defeat the popular resistance.

It remains an historic accomplishment for the workers and farmers of Vietnam that they are free of direct imperialist domination. The people of Vietnam today confront similar challenges as workers and farmers around

the world do resulting from the crisis of the capitalist system. But the fact that the U.S. rulers no longer dominate their country gives the workers and farmers of Vietnam a tremendous advantage in fighting against the ravages of capitalist exploitation.

As the anniversary of the war's end gives rise to much discussion, it is worth studying the real record of the war, a bipartisan effort from beginning to end, and of the antiwar movement that mobilized millions. Behind the musings of some of those looking back now, like Robert McNamara, who headed the Pentagon during part of the war, is an attempt to obscure the facts and justify U.S. policy, even while describing it as "mistaken."

One of the most important lessons we can learn by studying the history of the war in Vietnam is the impact working people can have when they mobilize to defend their interests, even against those with substantially greater military power and monetary resources. In the end, all the efforts of the "best and the brightest" who prosecuted the war were defeated by the tenacious resistance of the Vietnamese people and by the determined action, and sometimes extraordinary effort, of ordinary people who organized against the war in the United States and in other parts of the world. The most powerful military machine, the major imperialist nation on earth, was defeated.

The Vietnamese people showed the world it can be done, and that is a lesson worth taking to heart.

'Counterterrorism' bill would trample hard-won liberties

BY HARRY RING

Democrats and Republicans in Congress wasted no time after the Oklahoma City bombing in pledging their support to a so-called counterterrorism bill sent to the legislators earlier by President Bill Clinton. If the bill becomes law it will deal a crippling blow to the rights of noncitizens and citizens alike. Politicians of both parties promised to put the measure on the "fast track," expecting the bomb blast will silence objections to the trampling of civil liberties it contains.

These are some of the provisions of the bill:

- The president would be given the power to arbitrarily declare an organization "terrorist." There would be no way to appeal this.
- Noncitizens accused of "terrorism" could be tried by a special court in secret session.
- The accused could be held without bail in preventive detention.
- If no country will accept a person ordered deported, that person can be kept in jail indefinitely.
- Illegally obtained evidence could be used against the accused.
- The government's right to use wiretaps would be expanded.
- People could be convicted on the basis of secret evidence.

The draft bill specifically names the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) as "terrorist," even while Washington and Tel Aviv negotiate Gaza and West Bank autonomy with it.

Entitled the Omnibus Counterterrorism Act of 1995, the measure was introduced into Congress February 24 at Clinton's request.

In the Senate, it was presented by a bipartisan team of Pennsylvania Republican Arlen Specter and Delaware Democrat Joseph Biden. It was introduced in the House by two Democrats, Charles Schumer of Brooklyn, New York, and Norman Dicks of Tacoma, Washington.

The House judiciary committee held a public hearing on the bill April 6. Gregory Nojeim of the American Civil Liberties Union told the committee that the bill "does substantial damage to the U.S. Constitution."

CIA rails against slaughter

Acting CIA chief William Studeman urged passage of the bill. He testified that "terrorists" were committing "indiscriminate slaughter of innocent men, women, and children." His testimony coincided with new revelations of the murderous role of the CIA and its hirelings in Guatemala.

An analysis of the bill has been made by the Arab American Institute and the Center for National Security Studies.

It explains that the bill creates a new federal crime — "international terrorism." But this does not cover anything not already deemed a crime. Rather it is intended to bypass those democratic safeguards that may exist in the statutes it supersedes.

Federal jurisdiction would apply in any case where the alleged victim of terrorism, or the alleged offender, is not a U.S. national. This would be the first time national origin would provide the basis for federal jurisdiction over a crime. It aims a blow at the guarantee of equal protection under the law.

Those charged with terrorism who are here with no documents or with temporary visas would be subject to preventive detention without even the right to a hearing. Permanent residents so detained would be allowed a hearing, but the government could use "classified" — secret — information against them.

Bill creates new crime

The bill does create a new crime — "terrorist fundraising." The president's new powers would include prohibiting individuals and organizations in the United States from raising funds for organizations in other countries declared to be terrorist. This, too, would not be subject to appeal.

And, according to the analysis, disruption of commerce could be defined as a "terrorist" activity. This is sweeping enough to include striking pickets, antinuclear demonstrators, and more.

In many respects, this ominous new bill sets out to establish by legislation what Washington has been trying to accomplish with the eight-year prosecution of the Los Angeles Eight.

Since these Palestine solidarity activists were first rounded up, the government has been working to get a court decision that they should be deported for allegedly supporting "terrorist" activity of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), an affiliate of the PLO. And it wants a court decision officially stamping the PFLP a terrorist organization.

In the protracted legal fight, a federal judge has ruled that all noncitizens have the same constitutional rights as citizens and has also ruled that secret evidence cannot be used against the eight. The government is now trying to get these key decisions overturned by the court of appeals.

Strike wins higher pay for Australia car workers

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standards, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace, or

"Keep Lilli Ann open!" rang through the crisp noon air April 17 as 200 garment workers, members of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU), held a rally and informational picket line in front of San Francisco City Hall.

The workers, primarily immigrants from Asia and Latin America, are members of ILGWU Local 8 at Lilli Ann Corp., where they produce women's dresses,

ON THE PICKET LINE

other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Following a week-long strike, workers at BTR Nylex in Melbourne, who produce key components for car manufacturing, won a 9 percent wage increase over two years.

The walkout began after BTR management decided to use non-union labor on the assembly line. But the company was forced to back down as the impact of the strike hit the car assembly industry. Two of Australia's biggest car manufacturers, Ford and Toyota, laid off more than 6,000 workers April 11 as production ground to a halt as a result of the parts-plant strike. Employers warned that another 10,000 auto workers would be affected if the walkout continued.

This is the second industrial dispute to hit Ford in recent weeks. Last month nearly 2,000 workers walked off the job to protest against losing pay during a shutdown that was the result of a strike at the Ford plastic division.

San Francisco garment workers fight for jobs

Chants of "Save our jobs!" and

suits, and coats. On April 12, the company gave notice that it would close the factory in 60 days, after 62 years in business.

Dozens of Lilli Ann workers, including some rally participants, have already been laid off over the past several months. Union officials are pressing for the city administration to assist in finding a new owner to keep the plant in operation.

Rally speakers included Katie Quan, manager of the Pacific Northwest Council of the ILGWU, who spoke in English and Cantonese; San Francisco labor federation president Walter Johnson; and several members of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors — the city council.

Many of the workers, who carried signs in Chinese, Spanish, and English, have worked at the plant for more than 20 years. The mood of the rally was spirited and determined, but many union members expressed deep concern for the oldest members of the workforce. Several younger workers picketed with their arms around their oldest co-workers.

As the ILGWU members boarded a bus to return to an afternoon of work, Quan urged everyone to attend the union meeting that evening. The city agreed to



Militant/Tim Eliot

Workers from Justice for Janitors campaign marching in defense of immigrant rights in Los Angeles, February 1994. New contract improves wages, seniority rights, and benefits.

hold hearings on the status of the plant.

Los Angeles janitors win new contract

Justice for Janitors members of the Hospital and Service Employees International Union won a victory in Los Angeles April 3. After a four-month campaign of demonstrations and a rank-and-file janitors convention of 2,000, the major janitorial contractors, in conjunction with the Building Owners Management Association, signed a contract. Union janitors now clean 70 percent of the county's commercial office space.

Previously, the contractors threatened to replace many of the 8,000 unionized janitors with non-union workers. The management association had also demanded that workers pay 25 percent of any health-care premiums on existing

or new plans, and had offered only minimal wage increases. As part of the new contract, janitors won a fully paid family health-care and dental plan phased in over five years.

Most janitors are immigrant workers. Wages ranged from \$4.45 an hour in the greater Los Angeles area, to \$6.80 an hour in the more organized downtown buildings. By the end of this five-year contract, all workers will receive between \$6.80 to \$7.20 an hour, with the starting wage being only slightly less than top wages.

At a meeting of more than 1,000 janitors that voted overwhelmingly to approve the contract, union members cautioned that the agreement will not end their fight. "Management will try to cut our hours while trying to force us to do the same amount of work," said one worker.

The contract contains provi-

sions against speedup and protection against layoffs and cutbacks. It also includes new seniority rights and safeguards against company discipline. Some 6,000 janitors will get paid vacation and holidays for the first time.

"I am emotional because it is the first time the janitors at our building have won anything," said Clara Ramirez, who has cleaned offices in Woodland Hills for 10 years and makes only \$4.25 an hour. "I haven't heard all the details but I am very happy."

Contributors to this week's column include: Linda Harris, a member of Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union in Sydney; Joan Radin, a member of United Transportation Union Local 1732 in Oakland, California; and Mark Friedman, a member of International Association of Machinists Local 2785 in Los Angeles.

LETTERS

Glaring omission

Although a reader of many years, I am considerably put out (or is it: put off?) with the *Militant* for your unforgivable glaring omission in your editorial of March 27: "Nuclear waste, capitalist legacy." Oh really?

How about "Nuclear waste, etc., Stalinist legacy?" Try, won't you, a follow-up addendum: say a "teensy weensy" statement on East European pollution, nuclear or otherwise — that unfolding events after '89 — astounded "the West": progressive and conservative alike.

Please address this issue soon, in any case (as I know you have done, quite a long while ago) of the shameful, criminal misdeeds of all kinds in the former so-called peoples democracies.

Mary Shull
Acton, Ontario

Editor replies: The *Militant* has a long record of detailing the crimes of the Stalinist bureaucracies in the former Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, and China — including their contempt for the lives of working people and the environment. Two weeks after our editorial appeared, we ran an article — one of many in recent years — on the continuing devastation posed by the Chernobyl disaster in the Ukraine (see 'Militant,' April 17, page 11). The subject of the editorial to which reader Shull refers was the U.S. nuclear industry. She is correct in pointing out that nuclear waste is a danger no matter where it is. At the same time the greatest threat to working people around



the globe is headquartered in Washington. The nuclear legacy to humanity will persist until political power is taken out of the hands of the capitalist warmakers.

Russian revolution

Keep up the good work! The women's liberation insert (March 20) was excellent. Some early writings on the Russian revolution and Lenin and Trotsky would be great.

A reader
Baltimore, Maryland

More on Decatur, Illinois

I am interested in hearing more about the fights taking place in Decatur, perhaps a comprehensive article about all three strikes and the corporate and local government responses, as well as general support from the community. The *Militant* is awesome — keep it up.

Pieter Clayton
Boise, Idaho

Keep the truth coming

Thank you for three years of the truth. Renew me for two more

years.
Guy Blue
Tacoma, Washington

Picking nuclear targets

An article in the April 24 *Militant* mentions that Kyoto, the traditional capital of Japan, was not attacked by the U.S. Air Force during World War II. But it had a close escape. General Groves, head of the Manhattan Project, wrote, "If we had not recommended Kyoto as an atomic target, it...would most likely have been seriously damaged, if not destroyed."

Cities under consideration as targets for atomic weapons were spared conventional air raids so that study of the damage would reveal the power of the new weapons. "I particularly wanted Kyoto as a target because...it was large enough in area for us to gain complete knowledge of the effects of an atomic bomb. Hiroshima was not nearly so satisfactory in this respect," Groves wrote.

Secretary of War Stimson overruled him, sensitive to the importance of world public opinion on



Washington's standing in the post-war world. With hindsight, Groves came to agree, but added that Stimson "did not foresee that much of the criticism he so scrupulously sought to avoid would come from American citizens." General Groves's revealing book is entitled *Now it Can Be Told*. It also recounts U.S. military operations in Germany designed to capture or destroy suspected sites of German nuclear research before the arrival of their French and Soviet "allies."

Chris Morris
Manchester, England

Mumia Abu-Jamal

About 70 people rallied in the rotunda in Harrisburg's State Capitol March 28 to speak against the death penalty. Pennsylvania's new administration is pushing for a greater use of the death penalty. Six weeks into office, Gov. Thomas Ridge signed three death warrants and promises more.

The annual rally and lobby day was called by Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE). Activists came from

across the state of Pennsylvania as well as from New York, Maryland and Washington, D.C. Many came to demand a new trial for Mumia Abu-Jamal, a well-known political prisoner on death row. Abu-Jamal was convicted in 1981 for the shooting death of a Philadelphia police officer.

Pamela Africa of the International Concerned Family and Friends of Mumia spoke. "We don't know who killed police officer Daniel Faulkner, but we do know that Mumia didn't do it. He did not have a fair trial. We demand a trial like they're having for O.J. Simpson." Africa, to much applause, promised more protests if and when Governor Ridge signs a death warrant for Abu-Jamal, and denounced Black state politicians for doing little on his behalf. Abu-Jamal has been denied full access to his legal defense committee.

A statement was read from Mark Curtis, a member of the Socialist Workers Party framed-up on rape and burglary charges.

Glova Scott
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief.

Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

London agrees to Sinn Fein talks

BY NAOMI CRAINE
AND NELL WHEELER

In a significant development for the Irish freedom struggle, the British government retreated from its previous position and agreed April 24 to hold direct, ministry-level talks with Sinn Fein. London stated that "no subject is excluded from the dialogue," including discussing the withdrawal of British troops from occupied Northern Ireland. One of the main demands of Sinn Fein over the last few weeks has been that Prime Minister John Major quit stalling and assign a government minister, instead of lower-level officials, to meet with the republican party.

Until now, London had insisted it would not begin substantive talks until the Irish Republican Army (IRA) committed to disarm completely. Sinn Fein leaders have responded that talks should deal with "demilitarization" in the north of Ireland, beginning with the British military, which has more than 17,000 troops deployed there, along with the British-backed 10,000-strong Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC). While "decommissioning" of the IRA is to be the first point on the agenda for the talks, Sinn Fein has made clear it

will also raise for discussion the withdrawal of British troops, disarmament of the right-wing unionist paramilitaries, and the release of Irish political prisoners. British minister for Northern Ireland Michael Ancram and Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness are expected to begin meeting in Belfast the first week in May.

"This is a victory for the peace process, a victory for all those people who have a widespread expectation that we will move to all-party peace talks," said McGuinness April 24. The next day John Bruton, prime minister of the Republic of Ireland, said he was inviting Sinn Fein and the pro-British unionist parties in Northern Ireland to hold bilateral talks in Dublin. Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams commended Bruton's offer, but said, "It is of crucial importance that the British government is not permitted to set the pace of the peace process. We must all move speedily beyond bilateral, whether with the Dublin or London governments, into all-party talks led by both governments."

"No one should be misled into believing that face-to-face discussion with republicans is going automatically to bring about a change of heart by the British government," he added. "On their record to date, the British will seek to continue their stalling tactics." Adams appealed directly to Protestant workers, who under British rule have been treated by the government and employers as a privileged caste in Northern Ireland to divide them from workers who are Catholic. Referring to "the social and economic deprivation of working-class unionists," the Sinn Fein president said, "Take one look at any part of this island and the issues are no different. British economic policy in Ireland has failed, but so have the economic policies of successive governments in the 26 coun-



April 2 prisoner support rally in Crossmaglen, Northern Ireland.

ties" of the Republic.

If the unionist politicians are really concerned about working people who are Protestant, then they "should join with the rest of the people of this island in carving out a future for ourselves as equals, demanding new structures and new politics which are based on the foundation of jobs, housing, equality of opportunity, and access for all," Adams concluded.

The fight for the release of political prisoners continues to be a focus of activity for supporters of Irish self-determination internationally.

Larry Quinn, editor of the *Irish People*, a republican weekly published in New York, described activities of the Saoirse campaign in a recent interview. Saoirse is a non-party political organization dedicated to the release of all political prisoners. Quinn pointed to recent protest rallies to free the political prisoners in Crossmaglen, Northern Ireland, as well as in the

United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Many events will take place May 5-7, marking the anniversary of the death of Bobby Sands, who along with several other political prisoners in Ireland carried out a hunger strike in 1981.

Recent demonstrations, such as commemorations of the Easter rising across Ireland and around the world, were reported by the *Irish People* as being the largest in many years.

Quinn said he sensed that since the cease-fire, "it has been easier for people to come out and say, 'I support you,' without fear of reprisal" by the police and RUC. "The cease-fire really killed the British," he said, "because for years they were saying, 'Put down your guns and we'll talk.' So now that the guns have been put away, there's nothing they can do but negotiate. They're not doing all this out of the kindness of their hearts."

At the same time, however, "the British are still trying to divide the republican movement in Ireland" and make the Irish people pay the highest price for freedom, Quinn said. "They've taken some of the troops out of the city, but redeployed them in the countryside, where they continue to harass and brutalize people."

U.S. tour by Sinn Fein president Gerry Adams

May 9, Maine May 10, New York
May 11-13, California
May 15, Kansas City
May 16, Cleveland May 17, Chicago
May 19, Pennsylvania
May 20-21, Florida
May 22-25, Washington, D.C.
For more information call the
Friends of Sinn Fein at (212) 290-2353.

Youth counter rightists in Canada

CAROLE CARON

MONTREAL — "Not the church, not the state, women must control their fate," shouted 2,500 participants in a protest against Human Life International (HLI). The U.S.-based antiabortion outfit held its 14th annual conference here April 19-21. Demonstrators came from Montreal, Quebec City, Ottawa, Toronto, and Kingston, Ontario.

Founded in 1981 by Paul Marx, HLI boasts 53 branches in more than 39 countries. It actively campaigns against women's rights, lesbians and gays, feminism, sex education, and contraception. Its literature is full of anti-Jewish and anti-Muslim propaganda. One of its conference workshops in Montreal was originally titled: "The Muslim Threat to the World." Randall Terry, leader of the right-wing antiabortion group Operation Rescue, was one of the keynote speakers at the HLI conference.

The anti-HLI demonstration held on the first day of the conference was organized by a coalition of some 80 organizations, including women's groups, student associations, and community and political organizations.

Many young people joined the protest. "I am here because these people want to take us back more than 50 years," said Richard, a young unemployed Quebecois.

"The Young Amazons are here because we are against everything that HLI stands for," said Anna, one of the two founding members of the group. Representatives from the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics were present with a huge banner. Brenda Lee from Toronto explained that "we want to tell them it won't work here."

The crowd started to gather around 6:30 p.m. in the square across from Notre-Dame Basilica in old Montreal as HLI conference delegates arrived to attend a mass. Demonstrators were chanting, danc-



Militant/Monica Jones

Protest at antiabortion HLI conference in Montreal

ing, and clapping in a spirited manner as HLI delegates started to leave the church at 8:40 p.m. The rightists were supposed to stage a candlelight march under heavy police guard through the streets of Montreal back to their hotel rooms. But HLI members looked astonished by the num-

ber of protesters and walked quickly towards their hotel without trying to relight candles blown out by the wind.

The protesters booed and chanted "Go home!" and "Shame!" They blew whistles and horns, and beat drums.

Chants of, "No to violence" swept the crowd as some eggs, condoms filled with water, and bottles were thrown in the direction of the cops. The demonstrators remained focused on what they had come to protest.

Even the daily *La Presse*, which had run an editorial against the rally earlier, pointed out that the demonstrators were disciplined and serious.

The cops set an intimidating atmosphere at the protest, lining their cars all the way from the closest subway station to the church. Hundreds of heavily armed riot police circled the square. They banned the use of loud speakers by the demonstrators, making it even harder to organize the rally.

Police provocations of those opposed to HLI's ideas were exposed in an April 21 article in *La Presse* that reported an undercover cop, pretending to be a university student, had infiltrated the coalition. After chanting anti-HLI slogans at the demonstration, she proceeded to arrest one young protester.

At the end of the demonstration, when only a few hundred were still in the streets, Continued on Page 12

Defend Irish Prisoners Calendar of events

Belfast

Hunger Strike Commemoration. Speaker: Pat Doherty, vice president of Sinn Fein. Sun., May 7, 3 p.m. *Belfast City Hall.*

London

Create Peace, Unite Ireland. Speakers: Martin McGuinness, Sinn Fein; representative, Saoirse; others. Sun., May 7, 2 p.m. *Conway Hall, Red Lion Square.*

New York City

Saoirse Campaign Hunger Strike Commemoration. Sat., May 6, 3 p.m. - 5 p.m. *East 51st St. and Third Ave.* Social to follow at *The Glencorral, Third Ave. and 23rd St.* Tel: (212) 736-1916.

First Debate Between Sinn Fein and Unionist Political Party Representatives in Northern Ireland, Ireland, Britain, or the U.S. Speakers: Gerry O'Hara, Derry city councillor and chair of Sinn Fein Six County Executive, and Christopher McGimpsey, Belfast city councillor and former honorary secretary of the Ulster Unionist Party. Mon., May 8, 7 p.m. *Fordham University, Rose Hill Campus, Southern Blvd. Fordham Rd., Bronx.* Tel: (718) 817-4340.

Long Branch, New Jersey

Saoirse/Hunger Strike Commemoration. Sponsored by New Jersey Irish Northern Aide. Sun., May 7, 5 p.m. *Jack's Rib and Ale House, Brighton Ave.* Tel: (908) 571-5184

Washington, D.C.

11th Annual Memorial Mass for the Irish Hunger Strikers. Sun., May 7, 10 a.m. *Holy Redeemer College, 3112 7th St., NE.*